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THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

THE

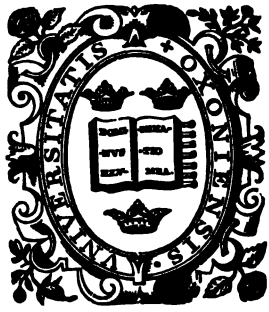
STANHOPE PRIZE ESSAY,

1877.

BY

CHARLES HARDING FIRTH,

SCHOLAR OF BALLIOL COLLEGE.



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THOS. SHRIMPTON & SON, BROAD STREET.
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THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

THE interest of a statesman's life depends upon the greatness of the events in which he took part, and its value is proportionate to the influence which he exercised over their course. The establishment of the British power in India, the long war against Napoleon, and the struggles for Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform, were the leading features of the political career of the Marquis Wellesley. It is by his action with reference to these that his rank amongst English statesmen must be determined.

Richard Colley Wellesley was born on the 20th of June, 1760. His father, Lord Mornington, was a man of great musical taste, his mother a woman of strong practical ability. He was sent to Harrow while Sumner was Headmaster, and took part in the riots which followed the election of Heath to the Headmastership in preference to Parr. The story that he was "the chief ringleader" in those disturbances seems to be untrue, from the fact that he was barely eleven years old at that time.[a] From 1772 to 1778 he was at Eton, and we can henceforth trace the continuous development of his character. His classical taste begins to show itself in his Latin verses, and the excellence of his scholarship testifies to his general literary power. His rhetorical gifts were shown in the school debating society, and in that recitation of Strafford's speech which moved George III. to tears, and gained the praise of Garrick.[b] He passed his holidays with Archbishop Cornwallis at Lambeth, and there met Lord Cornwallis, from whom he learnt much of India.[c] Important also in their results were the friendships he formed at Eton.[d] "Under Mrs. Young's tree at Eton, the brotherhood, for such it was, of Wellesley, Grenville, and Newport, commenced." Wellesley and Grenville acted together politically for some part of their lives, and the Grenville connection was of great value to Wellesley in his early official career.

Harrow.

Eton.

[a] Torrens, Empire in Asia.
[b] Jesse, Memoirs of the Reign of George III.
[c] Auber, Rise and Progress of British Power in India, ii., 159.
[d] Letter from Sir John Newport to Wellesley. Plunkett's Life, vol. ii., about p. 130.

Sir John Newport was six years older than Wellesley, so that his influence was naturally of very great weight. "You are the founder of my public character," wrote Wellesley to him in 1840. "You found me an idle boy, and by your example I was made diligent and studious, and inspired with that glowing passion for solid fame, that noble ambition to attain power and honour by deserving them, which has been my 'Star of Arcady,' my 'Tyrian Cynosure,' through my long and active life."[e]

Oxford.

In 1778, Wellesley left Eton for Christ Church, and two years later gained one of the University prizes for his Latin poem on the death of Captain Cook. In the year before, the same prize had been gained by Lord Grenville, and it was on the occasion of the recitation of Grenville's verses on Electricity in the Theatre that Wellesley first met Addington.[f] Addington was there to read the English Essay, Wellesley as prompter to Grenville; and a friendship which lasted for more than sixty years began then. In 1781, the death of Lord Mornington recalled Wellesley to Ireland; he left the University without taking his degree, and he returned home to superintend the education of his brothers, pay his father's debts, and take his seat in the Irish House of Lords.

Ireland.

It was the time when the great national movement which sprang out of the American war was at its full height in Ireland. The contest for free trade was now over, and the struggle for legislative independence was nearing its victorious close. Lord Mornington at once attached himself to the national party, joined the volunteers, and became the friend and follower of Grattan.[g] Being patron of the borough of Trim, it was only natural that he should be chosen Colonel of the Trim Volunteers; and when in 1821 he came to govern Ireland, men significantly remembered that this body was the first which admitted Catholics amongst its members.[h] Grattan formed a high opinion of the character and abilities of his young follower. "This prognosticates good," he said, when, as he was dying, they told him that Wellesley had been appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and a little afterwards he added, "We

Connection with Grattan.

[e] Wellesley to Newport. Letter in Plunkett's Life, vol. ii., 131-133. Newport's influence did not end with the inspiration of a motive. He accompanied Wellesley home, and brought about a better understanding between him and his parents ("frivolous people, I am afraid," writes Wellesley). "You taught them to respect me and my literary pursuits.—You were to me what my father might have been."—Compare, for the sentiment "noble ambition," Speech on the Catholic Claims, 1813: "I have always thought it to be the greatest glory and noblest species of ambition in the members of a free state to aspire to the high and distinguished offices of that state." Lord Brougham; Statesmen of George III. Pearce's Life.

[f] Life of Sidmouth. Pellew.

[g] Life of Grattan, by his son, vol. ii.

[h] O'Connell's Speech, 1822, on the arrival of Wellesley as Lord Lieutenant.

Connection with Lord Temple.

were old friends in our younger days: tell him I love him."[i] At this period Lord Temple was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Wellesley, who had made his acquaintance, most probably through Grenville, lived in confidential intercourse with him and steadily supported his government.[j] To his influence Lord Mornington looked for help in his political career, both in England and Ireland, and it was through his recommendation that he was in February, 1783, appointed a knight of the new Order of St. Patrick. The government of Lord Northington which followed, seemed intentionally to slight Temple, to be actuated by feelings of dislike and hostility to his administration, and while affecting to adopt his system of economy secretly to try and stultify it.[k] For these reasons it was opposed by Mornington, who moved a vote of thanks to Temple, pronounced an elaborate eulogium on his government, and attacked the extravagance of his successor. In November, 1783, he voted with the opposition in support of Lord Mountnorris' motion for annual Parliaments, but a question now arose on which he separated himself from them and supported the government. The question of Parliamentary Reform which Pitt in the previous year had brought forward in England, had been taken up by a large party throughout Ireland, and by the volunteers of Ulster in particular. In November, 1783, a convention of delegates met in Dublin, and a Reform Bill was drawn up, to be brought into Parliament by Flood. But the reforms which the Bill proposed were of doubtful benefit, and the manner in which it was supported was too palpable an invasion of the rights of Parliament. The convention of delegates, said Mornington, was illegal, and the volunteers had gone beyond the original idea of their institution. "We ought to lend the government our assistance whenever its imbecility may require it, to support the constitution."[l] For these reasons, though he approved of the principle of the Bill, he both spoke and voted against it. He was now rising rapidly in public estimation.[m] Fox applauded his conduct in resisting the Convention, and one of the first acts of Pitt's government was to name him a member of the Irish Privy Council.[n] In August, 1784, Pitt wrote to the Duke of Rutland to urge Lord Mornington's claims to state favour, and the Duke replied that his merits and powers to render the public essential service should be rewarded by the first office worthy of his acceptance which fell vacant.[o]

[i] Life of Plunkett, vol. ii.
[j] Court and Cabinets of George III. 1—210.
[k] Court and Cabinets. 1., 268—270.
[l] Speech quoted in Pearce.
[m] Wellesley's Speech on Lord Fitzwilliam's motion on the State of Ireland, 1812.
[n] The appointment is announced, Feb. 24th, 1784. Annual Register.
[o] Quoted in Memoir of Wellesley, Asiatic Journal, 1842.

In the same year he entered the English House of Commons, under the patronage of Lord Beverley, as member for Beeralston.[p] In opposition to Grattan he voted for Pitt's resolutions on Irish Trade, and thus justified his conduct to his former leader:—"I cannot discern the danger you seem to apprehend. I am persuaded that the administration never has had the invasion of the independence of Ireland in contemplation." Henceforth he adopted Pitt as his leader, and the prime minister had no more devoted friend and admirer than Lord Mornington.[q] He pronounced Pitt, many years later, the greatest statesman England had ever seen. Any promotion the minister vouchsafed to him he regarded as a mark of personal favour much more than as the reward of political adherence.[r] When he was passed over, what mortified him most was the decided preference Pitt showed to another; when office was promised, it satisfied his chief apprehension by assuring him that he was not entirely out of Pitt's mind.

The English Parliament.

Connection with Pitt.

The influence of the Marquis of Buckingham gained Lord Mornington, in 1786, a seat at the Treasury, and in the same year he made his first attempt in the House of Commons.[s] This was an attack on Lord North for his conduct with reference to the appointment of Hastings as Governor General, and took place in the debate on the Rohilla war. In the same year he defended the treaty of commerce with France, and in the course of his speech gave utterance to a maxim which might authorise the Manchester school of politicians to claim him as a disciple. "The true majesty of Great Britain is in her trade, and the throne of the commerce of the world the fittest object of her ambition."[t] On these speeches his friends founded great hopes, but their expectations were raised only to be disappointed by nervousness and want of resolution on the day of debate. Day after day during the session he came down to the House with an intention of speaking which he never carried into effect.[u] William Grenville wrote to the Marquis of Buckingham begging him to press Mornington very urgently to speak. Pitt laughed at his subordinate for the long time he took to prepare his speeches, and said that Mornington was the animal of the longest gestation he had ever seen.[v]

Early speeches.

On the regency question in 1789 Lord Mornington distinguished himself by his activity.[w] Not satisfied with sup-

[p] Life of Grattan.
[q] Letter in the Quarterly Review, vol. lvii.
[r] Letters to Addington. Pellew's Life of Sidmouth, vol. i.
[s] Court and Cabinets, i., 314. [t] Parliamentary Debates.
[u] Court and Cabinets, George III., i., 360-2. [v] Stanhope's Life of Pitt.
[w] Court and Cabinets, vol. ii., p. 89. Mornington wrote to Buckingham thus about

The Regency.

porting Pitt in England, he went over to Ireland to speak for the minority in the House of Lords, to protest, in company with twenty-two other peers, and to back up the Marquis of Buckingham in his refusal to transmit the address. The difficulty was solved by the recovery of the King, and Mornington was rewarded by the royal approbation and a place at the Board of Control.

The Slave Trade.

In 1792, when in opposition to Wilberforce, Dundas proposed that the slave trade should be abolished gradually, he brought forward two amendments in support of Wilberforce's plan, but both were lost. But the performance in his early parliamentary career which gained him most reputation was his speech on the war with France, in 1794. The occasion was an address of thanks on the King's speech, and Mornington stood forth as the champion of the ministerial policy, while Sheridan represented the Opposition. The speech occupied over two hours in delivery, and fills rather more than a hundred columns in the volume of parliamentary debates for the year. Its argument, however, was simple. He reviewed the progress of the war, enumerated the aggressions of the French abroad, and examined the principles on which their administration at home was based. At home the French government lived by preying upon all classes of the state, and by an organised system of attack upon commerce, religion, and property; abroad it existed by the annexation and plunder of weaker states. From these considerations, and from a careful study of the utterances of the French leaders, he came to the conclusion that such a state was of its nature hostile to all established governments, and that no peace could safely be made with France.

The war with France.

Sheridan replied in one of his ablest speeches, calling Lord Mornington's performance "a laborious farrago of anecdotes and extracts," and insinuating that his defence of the constitution was inspired by the hope of promotion more than by patriotism.

The Reform movement.

Corresponding in time to the French revolution abroad, came the Reform movement and revolutionary excitement at home. When Lord Grey's motion for parliamentary reform was debated in 1793, Mornington spoke against it, and again in 1795 he supported the Seditious Meetings Bill and made a long tirade against the reformers. The theory of the constitution which he formulated in those speeches rendered it impossible that he could approve of the change proposed. For he held that the constitution was a wonderful union of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, so delicately bound up together that the least touch would derange the machine.

Up to this time the career of Lord Mornington had hardly

his former leader: "Grattan is as much a creature of Fox and his party as the meanest libeller in the *Morning Herald*: he lives entirely with them."

been so successful as he expected. He had been made a commissioner of the Treasury and member of the Board of Control, but nowhere had he found free scope for his powers or satisfaction for his ambition. In 1794 he wrote thus to Addington: "I am very much afraid from a variety of circumstances that Pitt has no idea of altering my situation this year. I cannot tell you how much I am mortified at this, I have serious thoughts of relinquishing the whole pursuit and becoming a spectator, I cannot bear to creep on in my present position."[x] In the same year the coalition between Pitt and the Portland party took place, and one of Pitt's stipulations was that the next office which fell vacant, to be held with the Privy Council, should be given to Lord Mornington. For some time however a desirable vacancy did not occur, and in 1796 he became impatient, and on the death of Lord Mansfield wrote to Pitt, hoping that an opportunity to promote him might now offer. "My own wish," he told Addington, "undoubtedly would be to go to the House of Lords." However, in March 1797, Sir John Shore resigned the post of Governor General of India, and the desirable vacancy was at last created. The post had been promised to Lord Hobart, but he had managed to quarrel with Shore and to offend the Directors, so the promise was not fulfilled. It was offered to the Marquis Cornwallis, and for a time he seemed inclined to go to India again; but the particular danger which called for his presence died away, and he refused on the plea of age and infirmity. The presidency of Madras had already been offered to Lord Mornington,[y] with the promise of succession to the rank of Governor General after Cornwallis, and the offer had been accepted. Accordingly, "under circumstances, and for reasons of a peculiar nature," the Directors appointed the Earl of Mornington, and at the same time he was raised to the English peerage under the title of Baron Wellesley. "I knew you would rejoice with me," he wrote to Addington, "on my attainment of the peerage; it was to me an invaluable object, both public and private."

The Indian appointment.

The power of England in India was at that time menaced by great dangers. The territories of independent native powers separated the British possessions from each other. Bengal was cut off from Bombay and Madras by the great Mahratta confederacy, and Madras lay exposed to the attacks of Tippoo. The country of the Peshwa stretched between Bombay and the nearest English settlement. The power of Sindia extended over the north-west of the Deccan and Candesh, and reached as far as Guzerat and Delhi. The Rajah of Berar

The English position in India.

The native powers.

[x] Pellew's Life of Sidmouth.

[y] Lord Wellesley's letter to the Marquis of Buckingham, on his appointment. Court and Cabinets, ii., 389.

occupied the north and east of the Deccan and Cuttack, thus separating the Circars from Bengal. The territories of Holkar in Malwa, and the Guicowar in Guzerat, completed the list of the Mahratta kingdoms. It was evident that any coalition among these powers would render the position of the British dominions very dangerous; but it was improbable that their feuds would ever allow them to unite. There was, however, one influence which might combine all these discordant elements. In the service of Sindia was a native army disciplined and commanded by Frenchmen, and between the Jumna and the Ganges, on the most vulnerable portion of the north-west frontier, a French state was being established. The main strength of the Nizam lay in a corps of the same composition, and smaller bodies of the same kind were in the service of the Peshwa and the Rajah of Berar. Tippoo had French officers in his service, and there was scarcely a court in India without its staff of European adventurers. A common hostility to the rule of the English Company united them all, for it had driven the French from India, and to exclude all Europeans whatever was the aim of its policy. A league among these great native states, or a combination of native forces under foreign influence, were the dangers which the new Governor General would have to consider and perhaps to meet. Nor was the British power so well prepared to face such possibilities, or founded on so firm a basis that it could defy them. It could not rely upon the efficiency of the alliances it had formed with the native states. The very strength of the Nizam was a source of danger. Oude was weak from misgovernment, and the Nabob of the Carnatic unable to pay his subsidies. Neither were its own military forces ready for war, or its financial resources sufficient to support a series of campaigns. A few months back so serious a mutiny had arisen in the Bengal army that it was thought necessary to send out Cornwallis to deal with the disaffection. In Madras the army was without stores, equipment, or transport trains, and the frontier fortresses were without provisions. In both Bombay and Madras the credit of the Company had fallen very low; the treasuries there were exhausted, and their demands for aid drained the general treasury at Calcutta. In the position of the English was all the weakness of a rule acquired by force and maintained by force when that force itself is relaxing into weakness. Even years later Metcalfe could still write, "Our situation in India has always been precarious. We are still a handful of Europeans governing an immense empire, without any firm hold on the country, having warlike and powerful enemies on all our frontiers, and the spirit of disaffection dormant but rooted universally among our subjects."[1]

The European influence.

The British alliances.

The weakness of the British power itself.

[1] Selections from Lord Metcalfe's Papers. Kaye.

Wellesley's policy.

To meet such an array of difficulties a systematic policy was a necessity, and that the new Governor-General had already conceived. Before setting out to India he had announced his intention of conducting Indian affairs according to "a resolution formed on principles which a long attention to the affairs of India had enabled him to fix with some degree of confidence."[a] In matters of internal policy he would carry out the principles of the Marquis Cornwallis with which an intimacy of many years had made him well acquainted. "Lord Mornington thinks exactly as I do about India," wrote Cornwallis to Shore; "he is an enthusiast for the preservation of that plan of government which without your powerful assistance could never have been either founded or maintained."[b]

Internal policy.

Foreign policy.

In foreign policy, in his relations with other states he would act upon principles somewhat different from those which had inspired his two immediate predecessors. The doctrine of the balance of power was one which was then much in favour, and upon it the treaty of Seringapatam had been based. The Mahrattas and the Nizam were to be so strengthened that they could be a counterpoise to Tippoo and efficient allies in case of a war against him. A sufficient amount of strength was to be left to Tippoo to make him respectable and in some degree formidable to his neighbours. Above all, a kind of system was to be established among the states of India which could by the operation of checks and counter-checks secure durable peace and quiet. Thus the Company would not be exposed to the expense and danger of war, it would be enabled to devote itself to the production of dividends, the practice of the virtues of peacefulness and moderation, and the pursuit of a policy of non-intervention.

The Treaty of Seringapatam, 1792.

Theory of the balance of power applied to India.

Unfortunately for the practical success of this theory, it assumed an amount of stability in the system thus established which was not to be found in oriental kingdoms, nor amongst the states which spring up from the decomposition of a great empire. The idea was not quite Utopian, but it was European, and the conditions of political existence in Europe and Asia are very different. That the strong should attack the weak, should coalesce to conquer them, or perhaps for a season combine against a common danger: that the weak and the strong should be alike compressed by the weight of one great rule, and that the predominance of a single power should maintain peace for the many, these were the two theories of international politics which held in India. But the notion of a number of states existing side by side with the

[a] To the Marquis of Buckingham. Court and Cabinets, ii., 369.
[b] Kaye's Lives of Indian Officers, vol. ii., p. 170.

definite policy of protecting the weak from the aggressions of the strong and preventing the aggrandisement of the strong at the expense of the weak, in order to preserve by mutual efforts the equilibrium of forces, was only suited to Europe. Directly the external pressure was removed and the intervention of the English ceased, the states-system which they had established was broken up. The Mahrattas attacked the Nizam, and reduced him to an ignominious subjection. The power of the Peshwa sank lower and lower, and his headship became more and more nominal. Meanwhile Tippoo had been peacefully reorganising his revenues and his army, extending his intrigues and alliances, and preparing for revenge. Moreover, forces under French adventurers had been suffered to grow up, and no effort had had been made by Shore to prevent that growth. In five years the whole face of affairs had changed, and the balance of power had shifted. In fact, this balance of power could only be maintained by the continued interference of the hand which had established it, by the very policy of intervention which it had been supposed to obviate. So Lord Wellesley was forced to adopt a totally different plan of action, and to establish, not a fresh balance of power amongst the native states, but the predominance of the English power. It was the only way to secure safety for the British dominions and peace for India. To exclude foreign influences from India and to establish everywhere a firmer and closer union between England and her allies, were the aims which Wellesley set forth in his despatches from the Cape. A league under British headship against the invasion of Zemaun Shah, a renewal of the old league of 1792, the restoration of the Nizam to substantial power, and the banishment of his French officers, a revision of the alliances with Oude, Arcot, and Tangore, these were the measures by which he hoped to accomplish those aims.

Wellesley establishes the predominance of the British power.

In April, 1798, Lord Wellesley arrived at Madras and at once attempted to persuade the Nabob of the Carnatic to agree to a modification of the treaty of 1792, to liquidate his debt to the Company, or to place the management of some portion of his territory in their hands. The attempt was unsuccessful, and Wellesley passed on to Calcutta and began the consideration of the affairs of Tanjore; but his attention was called off by a more pressing necessity.

First measures.

On the 8th of June the Calcutta papers were full of a proclamation by the Governor of the Mauritius, announcing the reception of an embassy from Tippoo, and inviting the collection of a force to enable him to chase the English from India. On the 18th a despatch from Lord Macartney confirmed the authenticity of the news, and at once the Governor General determined to declare war or to

Tippoo Sultan.

exact a security for peace. He resolved to march one army from Bombay to seize the Sultan's portion of the Malabar Coast, and to move another from the Carnatic upon Seringapatam. Thus the Sultan was to be compelled to give up his maritime provinces, to dismiss all the Frenchmen in India, to receive residents, and to pay the expenses of the war. But the army was not ready—only eleven thousand could be collected—the fortresses were without provisions, and the stores and baggage train were wanting. In the Madras Presidency, upon which the burden of the war would fall, the idea of an attack met with great opposition. Mr. Webbe, the secretary of that government, anticipated nothing but shocking disasters and the impeachment of Lord Mornington for his temerity. General Harris, though he offered his own funds to supply the exhausted treasury, declared that an attack was more likely to end in defeat than victory. So the Governor General gave up his original plan, but determined to call upon Tippoo to disavow his ambassadors and explain his proceedings. Meantime he devoted himself to the organisation of the army for action, the strengthening of existing alliances, and the separation of Tippoo from the powers that might be inclined to join him. He directed troops to be assembled in the Carnatic without delay, "in order to impress the mind of Tippoo with serious apprehension." He improved the system of supplying draught oxen, and directed the collection of stores in all the frontier fortresses. The general enthusiasm in Calcutta, and the public subscriptions made there, enabled the Governor General to despatch a supply of specie to Madras. But in all this he had to encounter the opposition of the Madras Government, who feared that this activity would provoke an immediate invasion. At the same time Wellesley laboured successfully to draw the connection with the Nizam closer and to destroy his French army. In September, six thousand men under Colonel Kirkpatrick, destined to form the subsidiary force to be established in the Nizam's territories, joined his cavalry and surrounded the French camp. The troops inside were mutinous for their pay and surrendered their officers; and while the Frenchmen were transported to Europe, the natives entered the service of the Nizam or the British. "If I am not mistaken," wrote the Governor General to Addington, "my single exertion has saved the Carnatic from an invasion by Tippoo, and the Deccan, or at least the Nizam's dominions, from falling an immediate prey to the French."[a]

Preparations for war.

At the same time there were other measures in progress with the view of renewing the old alliance with the Mahrattas, or at least securing their neutrality. Negotiations were commenced

[a] Letter, Nov. 1796. Pellew's Life of Sidmouth.

with the object of freeing the Peshwa from the control of Sindia, and gaining effectual aid against Mysore. A subsidiary force for which he had often asked was offered and refused. Nevertheless, though he gave no help, the influence of Nana Furnavese, and the force gathered at Bombay, prevented any hostility. Sindia was urged to return to his dominions, and offered British co-operation against Temaun Shah. He refused, but the same causes which prevented the Peshwa from hostility restrained Sindia, and there was in addition a British force on the frontier of Oude which lay in a favourable position for an attack upon his territories, and at the same time negotiations for a defensive alliance between the British and his neighbour the Rajah of Berar were in progress.

Negotiations with Tippoo.

Meanwhile the Governor General had admitted the justice of Tippoo's claim to Wynaad and ceded it to him, in order to show that "there was no disposition to deny him the smallest point of his just rights." In November he communicated to Tippoo the destruction of the French fleet, and warned him against a connection with them. The Sultan replied with a curious explanation of his embassy, some abuse of the guile of the French, and some laudation of the treaty of 1792, but evaded the proposal to receive the Governor General's messenger. In January Wellesley answered Tippoo's letter by detailing the transactions in which the existing treaties had been violated, and warned him to receive Major Doveton, and reply without delaying a day. The beginning of February came: no answer had been received, and the season for active operations would soon be over. The Sultan was continuing his preparations, had despatched an ambassador to the Directory, and was endeavouring to protract matters till the rain came. Lord Wellesley at once gave orders to General Harris to invade Mysore, and determined to exact the terms which he had fixed upon when he first arrived in India. Ten day after the order had been given Tippoo offered to receive Major Doveton; but it was now too late, and it was too evidently an attempt to gain time. Two armies from Bombay and Madras marched on Seringapatam, defeated Tippoo in two engagements, and in a month from the commencement of the campaign met under the walls of Seringapatam. Another month was consumed in the siege; and on the fourth of May the city was stormed, and Tippoo fell in the fighting. The heir of the old Rajahs was sought out and placed on the throne, just as in 1818 the Rajah of Suttara was elevated on the fall of the Peshwa. Part of the

The partition of Mysore.

conquered territory was given to him, and the remainder was divided between the English and the Nizam. The Peshwa refused the portion which was under conditions reserved for his acceptance as a nominal ally. The most dangerous native enemy of the English power

and the centre of the French influence were thus destroyed. Lord Wellesley now proceeded by a variety of measures to extend and strengthen the British ascendancy, to follow up the attack on French influence by expelling them from what points of vantage they still held, and to consolidate by his internal administration the British possessions.

The extension of the British ascendancy by alliances.

By a system of alliances with the States of India he attempted to combine them all under British headship for the maintenance of peace, and to engage them to submit their disputes to the arbitration of the British power. In these treaties the support of a subsidiary force at the cost of the Prince with whom the alliance was made was the chief stipulation. Similar treaties had been made by Clive and Hastings, but Wellesley was the first to carry out the idea systematically. The original form of these subsidiary treaties was an alliance by which for a certain annual sum the Company bound itself to support a Prince with a certain body of troops, to be obtained in his dominions, and employed under certain restrictions. But increasing weakness and misgovernment, and inability to continue a regular payment, generally brought about important changes in the relations between the parties to the treaty, such as the cession of a piece of land in lieu of the subsidy, or annexation of the whole state by the Company. The subsidiary treaties which Wellesley made may be divided into three classes.

Subsidiary Treaties.

In those of the first class,[d] instead of an annual payment a cession of territory was made, the revenue of which was to support the necessary forces. This territorial assignment was to be considered a full and complete satisfaction for all demands, and even if there happened to be any deficiency in the yield of the lands thus acquired, no further charges were to be made.

In those of the second class,[e] it was stipulated that a subsidiary force should be maintained for an annual payment, and that in case the funds failed the Company should be at liberty to introduce into the system of government whatever change they thought necessary, in order to supply the deficiency. They were even empowered to assume and bring under their direct management whatever extent of country they thought necessary for that purpose. Yet they were not thereby constituted proprietors of the territory thus occupied, but merely stewards, for they were to render periodically a faithful account of the revenues to the Prince, and to guarantee that his receipts should never fall below a certain sum.

The third class of treaties contains those by which on the bankruptcy of the ruler the Company appropriated his territories,

[d] Instance, Oude.

[e] Instance, Mysore.

leaving him a title and a fixed income to support it. This was simply a further development of the principle of the second class, —a development, however, not into temporary occupation but permanent possession.[f]

The effects which treaties of this kind produced on the states with which they were made, were very marked both in their external relations and internal condition. "Wherever they submit to receive a subsidiary force to be constantly stationed in their dominions, they have in fact lost their independence. They are influenced by the councils of the British government, they become accustomed to its superiority, they sink into the rank of tributaries, and on the failure of heirs, or perhaps sooner, form provinces of the British Empire." The ruler of such a state, freed from the necessity of self-defence, generally misgoverns. "The usual remedy of bad government in India is a quiet revolution in the palace, or a violent one by rebellion or foreign conquest. But the presence of a British force cuts off all chance of such a remedy by supporting the Prince on the throne against every foreign and domestic enemy. Its inevitable tendency is to bring every state sooner or later under the exclusive dominion of the British government." On these grounds Wellesley is charged with having established the ascendancy of the English power by means which ruined the native states while professing to preserve them. That owing to the pressure of these treaties the unhappy princes became more and more indebted to the British government, and the internal condition of the states grew worse and worse, till these results which this policy had produced were constituted pretexts for annexation. That this was foreseen by Wellesley, and that he deliberately intended the treaties to produce this ultimate result of complete annexation. Then his policy is pronounced perfidiously wicked and worthy of Machiavel. The plausibility of the accusation cannot be denied, but its truth may be disputed. The intention of Lord Wellesley was not to secure ultimate annexation, but "that degree of control and ascendancy which it is our interest to establish." The establishment of some such control was a necessity of the position which the English government under Wellesley was assuming,—that of a superior power charged with the duties of arbitrating between the States of India, and securing the public peace by its superior strength. The acceptance of these treaties by the native states denoted the acceptance on their part of this subordinate relation. Assuming that this end was justifiable, as best for England and for India, it is difficult to see by what other means it could have been

The evil effects of subsidiary treaties.

The charge brought against Wellesley.

Justification of Wellesley and the treaties.

[f] Instance, Carnatic.

effected. The beginnings of the system were there already, sanctioned by the use of his predecessors. It is true that the system of subsidiary treaties was one which was dangerous to the internal prosperity of the states to which it was applied. This Wellesley saw and endeavoured as far as possible to correct and prevent, and he tried to prevent also the complications which led to annexation. The worst form of subsidiary treaty, the most fruitful in anarchy and embarrassments, was the original form in which the native government collected the subsidy. This Wellesley, in accordance with the instructions of the Court of Directors, always endeavoured to change into what I have called a subsidiary treaty of the first class, in which land took the place of subsidy. By this commutation of the money payment future complications were prevented, and the part of the state which remained to the native ruler was freed from the burden. The policy of the treaties of the second class was dictated by like considerations. "Recollecting the inconveniences and embarrassments which have arisen to all parties concerned under the double government and conflicting authorities unfortunately established in Oude, the Carnatic, and Tanjore, I resolved to reserve to the Company the most extensive and indisputable rights." Only when the evils of misgovernment, and the embarrassments caused by former treaties, had become politically dangerous did he as the sole remaining remedy propose complete annexation.

Treaty with the Nizam.

Some of these treaties demand separate consideration. Some little time after the fall of Seringapatam, the Nizam offered, in lieu of the old payment of forty lacs a year, and in consideration of the guaranteeing of his dominions against the Mahrattas, to transfer all the territory he had acquired in the two wars against Mysore to the Company. The Mahrattas had claims upon the Nizam, and every one who knew anything of the politics of India, said the Duke of Wellington might have foreseen that the consequences of this measure would be sooner or later war with the Mahrattas.

The Carnatic.

The Carnatic became an English province on the death of the Nabob Ormat ul Dowlah. The Nabob had for some time been deeply in debt to the Company; and he had, contrary to the stipulations of the treaty of 1792, granted mortgages on the revenue of the provinces which had been assigned for the support of the subsidiary force. Lord Hobart, and after him Lord Wellesley, in vain endeavoured to persuade him to consent to some modification of the treaty, and to cede permanently some territory instead of a large debt and a subsidy always in arrears. On the storming of Seringapatam, traces of a correspondence between Tippoo and the present Nabob and his father were discovered. Moreover, the Nabob had failed to give even the small contribution for the war which he had promised. The stipulations of the treaty were thus

broken; and Lord Wellesley determined to deprive him of the government, and force him to retire on a pension. When the sanction of the Directors to this measure arrived, the Nabob was dying, so it was not enforced till after his death. His son refused to accept the dignity on such terms, and so his nephew was raised to the title in his stead, and the Company added the Carnatic to its dominions.

Oude.

But the treaty which caused most controversy was that with Oude. The connection of the English with Oude began in 1764 with the conquest of that country and the cession of Corah and Allahabad. Its independent existence was based on the forbearance of Clive, and British arms, under Hastings, had extended its frontiers. On the representation of the Nabob Vizier, Cornwallis had reduced the subsidy, but had refused for fear of the Mahrattas to reduce the subsidiary force. At the same time he wrote thus to the Directors: "I shall avoid making any remarks upon the original grounds or supposed rights which induced us to interfere in the details of that unfortunate country; and shall only say that I am afraid it has done us no credit in Hindostan: but that the imperfect way in which we did or could interfere could hardly fail of being attended by the consequences that have been experienced, that of giving constant disgust and dissatisfaction to the Vizier without producing a shadow of benefit or relief to the body of the inhabitants." Shore in 1798 changed the succession, raised the subsidy and the subsidiary force, fixed the number of the Vizier's native army, and engaged on behalf of the Company that the defence of Oude should be entirely undertaken by them. In November 1797, Wellesley, conceiving that the necessities of the defence required a larger British force, proposed to the Vizier to disband his own army to pay for the necessary augmentation. The Vizier resisted, offered to abdicate in favour of his son, asked leave to go on a pilgrimage, declared his inability to get the money even by disbanding his forces, and finally impeached the justice of the proceedings, and referred to the articles of the late treaty. The Governor General nevertheless added the necessary regiments, and when the Vizier said that his resources were insufficient to pay for them, replied that in that case the Company must interfere to preserve their own interests from destruction, and laid before him the alternatives of resigning the management of the whole of his dominions or ceding in perpetuity a part. For a long time the Vizier held out, but when he perceived that the second alternative would at all events be enforced by the Governor General, reluctantly signed a treaty, ratifying the cession. The first object of Wellesley was to secure the subsidy with regularity for the defence of Oude.

s The accusation is made most strongly by Mr. Torrens, "Empire in Asia."

The second was foreshadowed in the words of Cornwallis, "benefit and relief for the body of the inhabitants." "In place of inveterate and growing abuses must be substituted a wise and benevolent plan of government calculated to inspire the people with confidence in the security of property and life; to encourage industry, and to establish order and submission to the just authority of the state on the solid foundations of gratitude for benefits received and expectation of continued security."[h]

The measure may be justified by political necessity, and Wellesley excused by zeal for the public service. A man who determines beforehand on the plan of action he considers best for the general interests, and proceeds to carry it out without regard to the hardships of individual cases, is overbearing to others in proportion to the strength of his own convictions. The measure may be justified, but the imperious coercion by which the Vizier was forced to submit to it was neither creditable to the British rule nor to Wellesley.

The exclusion of European influences.

By his system of treaties Lord Wellesley had thus extended English influence over the greater part of India: it remained to complete the exclusion of other European influences.

France.

It was necessary first to prevent any invasion from Egypt, or any more arrivals from the French islands. Therefore on the fall of Seringapatam Wellesley assembled an armament at Trincomalee. The original intention of these preparations was an expedition to Batavia, and when that was given up an attempt to capture Bourbon and the Mauritius was resolved upon. But Admiral Rainer refused to co-operate, so that enterprise was abandoned; and seven thousand men under Sir David Baird sailed from Bombay to co-operate with Abercromby in expelling the French from Egypt. On the treaty of Amiens, Wellesley was directed to restore to France "all the countries, territories, and factories" which had belonged to it in India when the war began; and a French fleet arrived off Pondicherry to take possession. It was already suspected that the treaty would not last long, and the strength of the expedition was such that the outbreak of a war would render it very dangerous. Therefore the Governor General boldly assumed the responsibility of refusing to surrender until he had again communicated with the home government, and the renewal of hostilities prevented the restoration from ever taking place.

Holland.

The Dutch Wellesley conceived to be "French under another name."

Denmark.

The Danish settlements were centres of intrigue and refuges for adventurers.

"You would render a most important service to our national interests," wrote Wellesley to Dundas, "if you

[h] Wellesley Despatches.

could devise any means for annihilating the whole of these petty European states throughout the continent of India; but above all those of Tranquebar and Serampore." Accordingly, directly hostilities with Denmark commenced in 1801, these were seized, but only to be restored next year on the conclusion of peace.

Portugal.

In a like manner, the Portuguese settlements, Goa, Damaun, and Diu, were occupied by the British troops as soon as Portugal allied itself with France.

But the greatness of a statesman cannot be estimated only by the ability shown in the acquisition of dominion; it is much more by the administration of it that the judgment must be decided. The principles which the Marquis Wellesley set forth in his despatches, and upon which he endeavoured to conduct the internal government of India, had at that time an air of novelty.

Internal administration.

Principles.

"I consider the possessions, to the government of which the Company have succeeded, as a great empire. To view those possessions in any other light must always lead to the most erroneous conclusions as to the principles of policy by which they ought to be governed."[i]

"While the Company represents the sovereign executive power, its duties of sovereignty must be deemed paramount to its mercantile interests."[j]

"It would not only be impolitic but highly immoral to suppose that Providence has admitted of the establishment of the British power with any other view than that of its being conducive to the happiness of the people as well as our national advantage."[k]

"Duty, policy, and honour require that India should not be administered as a temporary and precarious acquisition, as an empire conquered by prosperous adventure and extended by fortunate accident, of which the tenure was as uncertain as the original conquest and successive extension were extraordinary: it must be considered as a sacred trust and a permanent possession."[l]

Having before his eyes these general maxims, Wellesley introduced several changes into the constitution and administration of the government.[m] The legislative, executive, and judicial powers had been united in the Governor General, just as they had been in the native princes whom the Company succeeded. Even the remodelling of the government of Bengal on the principles of the British constitution had not disturbed these powers, but merely subjected the exercise of them to certain checks. Wellesley held it necessary that the Governor General should still retain the executive and legislative powers, but thought

Separation of legislative and executive powers.

[i] Despatches, ii., 312.
[j] Ibid., iii., 202.
[k] Ibid., ii., 325.
[l] Ibid., ii., 339.
[m] Ibid., ii., 312.

that he might resign the judicial. No political necessity demanded that he should retain it, and the union was unwise in principle. Accordingly, Wellesley reconstructed the Sudder Court of Calcutta, which was at once the highest local court of appeal and a court of supervision for the justice and police of the presidency. The Governor General and Council surrendered their judicial functions to a distinct body of judges, and a court independent of the executive was established.

Centralisation of the executive power.

The centralisation of the executive power in the hands of the Governor General and the Government of Bengal, was a theory which Wellesley held very strongly. In all matters relating to foreign affairs, and to making of war and peace, in all matters connected with the unity, strength, and stability of the British power in India, it was needful that the Governor General should control the two subordinate governments. Their position was like that of dependent states, and their connection with the government resembled that of the Crown with the colonies. But in so far as related to the internal government of the country the Governor General should be gradually subjected to the complete control of the law.

Position of the natives.

No share in the legislative power.

The legislative power must still be left in the hands of the Governor General in council. "There is no change in our situation in this country which can be supposed, by which it would be expedient to admit any part of our native subjects to participate in the legislative authority."[a]

Little employment of natives in the executive.

But Wellesley recognised the impolicy of excluding natives of India so completely from power and office. "There is perhaps no example," wrote Munro, "of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share of the government of their country, as in British India." Wellesley thought that they might be used to a certain extent in the diplomatic service of the state. "They may occasionally be employed with advantage for the promotion of temporary views of policy or for the attainment of separate and limited objects. They may sometimes be rendered in a subordinate situation, successful instruments for opening the way to political systems of a more permanent and comprehensive nature." The constitutional dishonesty of Indian statesmen, and their ignorance of British principles, unfitted them for anything higher. The conspiracy of Vizier Ali at Benares called forth these reflections for the Court of Directors. "You will observe," wrote Wellesley, "that the persons concerned in this scheme are almost exclusively Mohammedans, and some of them of high rank. It is a radical imperfection in the constitution of our

[a] Despatches, ii., 314.

establishment in India that no system appears to have been adopted with a view either to conciliate the goodwill or control the disaffection of this description of our subjects whom we found in possession of the government."

Land settlement.

The foundation upon which any scheme for the lasting prosperity of a country must be based is security of property. Accordingly, the land settlement which Cornwallis had introduced was confirmed and carried out by Wellesley. He believed this system to be "a fruitful source of happiness, wealth, industry, and population." The Act, he said in 1813, was solidly beneficial to the country; he professed himself proud of it, and should be ambitious to have the record of it inscribed upon his tomb.

Civil Service.

In his changes in the Civil Service also, Wellesley trod in the steps of Cornwallis. He determined to make the situations of the public officers who were his instruments for the conduct of the government, offices of high honour and of the first emolument.[o] But his reforms went further. "The civil servants of the East India Company," he wrote, "are no longer to be considered as the agents of a commercial concern. They are in fact the ministers and officers of a powerful sovereign; their duties are those of statesmen in every other part of the world." To perform such a charge it was necessary that they should have some knowledge of the customs, literature, language, and laws of the people.[p] Therefore he founded a college at Calcutta, in which young civilians should study these things and complete their European education, while at the same time the influences of religion and discipline confirmed and strengthened their characters. Professors at high salaries were sought, and learned men from all parts of India invited to attend. The Court of Directors approved of the idea generally, but did not see the necessity of the institution, and passed an order for its immediate abolition.[q] The college had been established without their sanction, and would entail an expenditure of £40,000 a year. Wellesley wrote a long and vigorous protest, and vowed that if they abolished it, he would propose a law for its establishment directly he returned to the English Parliament. "I am determined," he said, "to devote the remainder of my political life to the establishment of it, as the greatest benefit which can be imparted to the public service in India, and the best security which can be provided for the welfare of our native subjects."[r] By the influence of Castlereagh and the Board of Control, he succeeded in persuading the

[o] Notes on the Foundation of a College at Fort William. Despatches, ii., 325.
[p] Despatches. [q] Pearce, vol. ii., 214.
[r] "Had Lord Wellesley thought it worth his while to use a little management with the Court of Directors, he might have settled his college on any plan within moderate bounds that he might have chosen." Cornwallis to Barlow. Kaye, ii., 170.

Directors to permit the continuance of it, but only upon a very reduced scale.

Religion. In dealing with religion, the policy of Lord Wellesley was cautious and decided. He believed that an Established Church was a necessary support to the state, and formed plans for an English Church Establishment in India. "He resolved also to make it be seen that the Christian religion was the religion of the State, and therefore at different times appeared in his place as chief representative of the British nation, attended to church by all the officers of government, to give the Christian religion the most marked respect of the Governor of the country."[s] For the same reason he patronised and protected the missionaries. They were, he said, a quiet, orderly, discreet, and learned body;[t] and he employed several in the college at Fort William. He thought it his duty also to have the Scriptures translated into the language of the country, and to give the learned natives employed in the translation the advantage of access to the sacred fountains of Divine truth. He thought that a Christian governor ought not to do less, and knew that a British governor ought not to do more.

The religions of the country he respected, but he did not hold that any interference was intolerance.[u] When it seemed likely that the fortune of war would throw the Temple of Jugunnath into the hand, of the English, the strictest orders were given concerning the conduct to be observed towards priests and temple. Pilgrims were to be protected; guards were to afford perfect security to the persons and ceremonials of the Brahmins and the sanctity of the religious edifice; all the property of the temple was to be respected as consecrated to religious use by the customs of the Hindoos. But no engagements were to be entered into which would prevent the British Government from reforming any of the existing abuses and vexations of the institution. In the same cautious way he dealt with the custom of sacrificing children at the Island of Sagur and other places. After consultation with the Brahmins of Fort William College, who declared that it was not sanctioned by Hindoo law but merely by barbarous custom, an edict was issued declaring the practice to be murder and the punishment death.[v] He also commenced investigations with a view to the abolition of Suttee.

Commerce. The action of Wellesley with reference to free trade was one of the most important measures of his administration. He considered it abstractedly a great political principle that commerce should be unfettered, but the principle should be regulated and restrained by political

[s] Letter from the Rev. David Brown, from Calcutta, 1805. Given in Kaye's Life of Henry Martyn, p. 40.
[t] Speech, April 9th, 1813, on the East India Bill.
[u] Despatches, iii. 270. [v] Pearce, vol. ii., 295.

considerations.[w] He could not have the trade of India thrown open, for that would damage the industry of England by an inundation of the fabrics of India; and the political power of the Company depended for its existence on their commercial monopoly. But the trade of India was too large for the resources of the Company to embrace it all, and a great carrying trade fell into the hands of foreign vessels. The Americans, the Portuguese, and the Dutch gained what the subjects of Great Britain lost. For this reason he wished to establish an organised system of intercourse between India and London, and attempted by temporary regulations to secure some share of the commerce for British interests. But the Court of Directors and the Court of Proprietors both united to condemn the policy of the Governor General. Thus in two of his most important measures Wellesley was directly thwarted by the Government of the Company and supported by the Government of the Crown. It was only natural that it should be so, for he had announced his intention to be guided by political rather than commercial considerations. The Court of Directors had also, in spite of Wellesley's protests, ordered him to reduce the military establishment, and to reduce many of the allowances which he had granted to those whom he employed on important duties. In certain measures they had superseded his authority with regard to the minor presidencies; they had interfered with the nomination of his officers, and forced him to remove some in whom he trusted and promote others whom he considered unfit. The concentration of power in the hands of the Governor General, and the government of India as an Empire, two of the fundamental principles of his administration, were thereby impugned. He was menaced also with "angry orders of various descriptions for the subversion of the most important acts and institutions of his administration, and for the entire change of its general tenor and spirit." Besides, he regarded the attacks on the appointments of his brothers as personal insults. For these reasons, Lord Wellesley, in 1802, sent in his resignation to the Court of Directors. On the other side the Court of Directors had much of which to complain. He had assailed their dearest privileges, the commercial monopoly and the patronage. Above all he had continually neglected or contemptuously treated them. "It has fallen in my way to know," wrote Cornwallis, "the embarrassments which the neglect or incivility of Lords Wellesley and Clive to their honourable masters have occasioned to the ministers and the Board of Control." But in spite of these differences the Directors requested Wellesley to stay for two more years to carry out his schemes of retrenchment and complete his system of administration.

Quarrels with the Directors.

[w] Speech on the renewal of the East India Company's charter, 1813.

The Mahratta war.

A great war with the Mahrattas was now at hand. Such a result might have been regarded as the natural consequence of the treaty which guaranteed the dominions of the Nizam against them. The only way of preventing it was to induce the Peshwa, as the head of the Mahrattas, to become a party to the alliance, and submit his claims to the arbitration of the Governor General. The proposal had been made and rejected before, but in 1802 the relations between the Mahratta chiefs were such that it was deemed possible to obtain the agreement of the Peshwa to a treaty of that kind. Since 1793 the Peshwa had been under the control of Sindia, but in 1801 the power of that chief was threatened by the rise of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. Though defeated by Sindia, he rapidly gathered a fresh army, marched on Poona, and conquered the troops of Sindia and the Peshwa under its walls. The Peshwa himself escaping from his capital fled to Bassein; and there on the last day of December assented to the terms he had before rejected. A force of six thousand men was to be established in his territories, for whose support a district in the Deccan was assigned. He was to retain in his service no Europeans belonging to a nation at war with the English, he was to engage in no war without their concurrence, and to submit his claims on the Nizam and the Guicwar to their arbitration. Thus a degree of control and ascendancy was to be established by means of the Peshwa over the Mahrattas, which should secure the tranquillity of India, and the security of the British dominions. The conclusion of the treaty menaced the independence of all the Mahratta chiefs, and thwarted the ambition of Sindia and Holkar. Accordingly a confederacy was formed between Sindia, Holkar, and the Rajah of Berar; and it was encouraged by the Peshwa, who had already repented of his alliance. Lord Wellesley having expressed to them his desire to continue friendly relations, and his intention to resist any attempt to interfere with the treaty of Bassein, prepared to prevent any such interference. An army of observation under Colonel Stevenson was stationed on the frontier of the Deccan, and another army led by General Wellesley, and aided by the feudatories who held the south of the Peshwa's dominions, reached Poona by a forced march and re-established the Peshwa. Tokens of hostility, intercepted letters, the declared intention of Sindia and the Rajah of Berar to proceed to Poona to "adjust the government," the junction of their armies,—all seemed to the Governor General to signify war. He had entrusted General Wellesley with full powers to conclude a treaty or commence hostilities without applying to Calcutta, and for some time negotiations went on. The ultimatum of the Mahrattas was a proposal that the British

The treaty of Bassein.

Hostility of the Mahratta chiefs.

Negotiations.

troops should be withdrawn to Madras and Bombay, whence they had been gathered, while their armies would fall back forty miles. Such a proposal meant that the British territories should be left open to any sudden attack the Mahrattas might choose to make, and that they should have the opportunity of beginning war with a decided advantage. "You have chosen war, and are answerable for the consequences," replied the General, and he at once began hostilities. The war was the result of the treaty, but such a result had seemed unlikely, for it was argued that the Mahratta chiefs would not act together against the British, and that unless united they would not attack. The favourable opportunity of establishing an influence which would probably prevent war, could not be thrown away because possibly the attempt might produce it. "The treaty of Bassein," said the Duke of Wellington, "and the measures adopted in consequence of it, afforded the best prospect of preserving the peace of India; and to have adopted any other measures would have rendered war with Holkar nearly certain, and war with the whole of the Mahratta nation more than probable."

Justification of the Treaty.

A great campaign now began. General Wellesley in the Deccan captured Sindia's great arsenal Ahmednuggur, conquered all his territories south of the Godavery, and thoroughly defeated him and the Rajah of Berar at Assaye. The two confederates were separated by the battle. The possessions of Sindia in the Deccan were subjugated, and he was forced to conclude a provisional armistice, while the defeat of the Rajah at Argaum, the capture of Gawilghur, and the occupation of Cuttack, obliged that chief to sue for peace. Cuttack and part of Berar were in consequence ceded, and he was engaged to submit to the arbitration of the British Government, and to exclude the French from his dominions. In Hindostan, Lake carried out the instructions of the Governor General by a rapid series of victories. The three points on which most stress was laid in those orders were the destruction of "the French State on the banks of the Jumna," the possession of Delhi and Shah Aulum, and the formation of an alliance with the Rajpoots and other powers beyond the Jumna, so as to exclude Sindia from northern India.

General Wellesley's campaign.

Lake's campaign.

The troops which De Boigne had disciplined and led, which had raised the power of Mahdajee Sindia to such a height, and fixed it on so broad a basis, amounted at this time to twenty-eight thousand infantry and five thousand horse. When De Boigne left India the command of the army devolved upon Perron, to whom the continued absence of Dowlut Rao Sindia at Poona left also the administration of his dominions in Hindostan and the charge of the Mogul.

The French state.

The substantial power which the government of so large a territory and the command of so well appointed an army gave, was in the hands of a man distinctively a Frenchman of those times in his hostility to the English. Fortunately, however, a separation had arisen between the adventurer and his master.[x] Sindia had been induced to deprive Perron of the greater part of the districts under his management; he had even attempted to seize his person, and before Lake commenced the campaign, had dismissed him from his command. But in spite of the overtures which Lake made, Perron refused to betray his trust, and it was not till after the capture of Allyghur and the news of his dismissal, that he quitted the cause of Sindia. The defeat before Delhi produced the surrender of four more of his officers, and the battle of Laswaree finally destroyed the infantry he had disciplined, while it pointed out how dangerous they might have proved. "These battalions," wrote Lake, "are most uncommonly well appointed, have a most numerous artillery as well served as they possibly can be, the gunners standing to their guns until killed by the bayonet: all the Sepoys of the enemy behaved exceedingly well, and if they had been commanded by French officers the result would have been, I fear, extremely doubtful. I never was in so severe a business in my life, or anything like it."

The Emperor.

Though the rule of the Mogul had come to an end, the influence of his name in India was still very great. The states acknowledged his sovereignty, the princes bore the titles he had granted, and his superscription was on the current coin of every established power. Temaun Shah had asserted the intention of restoring Shah Aulum. French documents had fallen into the hands of Wellesley suggesting the enthronement of the Mogul under French protection, and intimating that he might transfer to his protectors the rights which the English Company had forfeited. The army which Perron had commanded had the custody of the Emperor, and went by the name of the imperial army. When Lake entered Delhi he found "the unfortunate and venerable Emperor oppressed by the accumulated calamities of old age, degraded authority, extreme poverty, and loss of sight, seated under a small tattered canopy, the remnant of his royal state, with every external appearance of extreme misery." Wellesley proposed his removal to Monghir, but he clung so tenaciously to Delhi and its associations, that the design was abandoned. He was established as King of Delhi, and a little territory round the city, saddled with the support of a British contingent, and restrained by the supervision of a resident. But the Governor General neither acknowledged the constitutional position of the Mogul as suzerain of

[x] Article in the Edinburgh Review, No. European Adventurers in India.—Contrast between Perron and Du Boigne, and Account of the Quarrel between Perron and Sindia.

India, nor asserted the practical sovereignty of the English Government, and their actual succession to the power which he had lost. He "deemed it equally unnecessary and inexpedient to combine with the intended provision for his Majesty and his household the consideration of any question connected with the future exercise of the imperial prerogative and authority. In fact he evaded rather than solved the problem—how to dispose of this formidable white elephant."[7]

The treaty with Sindia.

By the treaty with Sindia, which took place in 1803, he ceded all his territories lying between the Ganges and Jumna, Broach, and part of Guzerat, Ahmednuggur, and some territory in the Deccan, and acknowledged the dependence of some princes with whom Lake had concluded treaties. The Rajah of Burtpoor and four Rajpoot chiefs were absolved from their allegiance to the Mahrattas, and established as independent states in alliance with the Company, and forming a barrier between the English possessions and those of the Mahrattas.

Further alliances.

Holkar.

Meanwhile Holkar, who stood aloof during the war, had been amassing money by plunder, and gathering the relics of the defeated armies into his service. He had now collected a great army estimated at sixty thousand horse and fifteen thousand foot, and began intriguing with Sindia and the brother of Zemaun Shah, and inciting British allies to revolt. He demanded from the English the restoration of the Chout, the cession of districts in the Deccan and Dooab, which he said had once belonged to his family, and made an inroad into the territory of a British ally. Lord Wellesley at once ordered Lake and his brother to take the field against Holkar; and they drove him south of the Chumbul. But Lake instead of continuing the pursuit, as General Wellesley urged him to do, withdrew his army into cantonments, and sent Colonel Monson with a small force of Sepoys and irregular cavalry into the territory of Holkar.

Monson's defeat.

The Governor General, thinking all danger for the season over, had ordered Lake to withdraw his forces into cantonments, and either to strengthen the detachment under Monson or to withdraw that also. Monson advanced too far, and his troops were almost annihilated in the retreat. Everywhere the reputation of the English name received a shock. Holkar was enabled to assume the defensive, and besiege Delhi and ravage the Dooab. The Rajah of Burtpoor joined him; Sindia prepared to do likewise, and defied the Governor General by letter: the disaffection of the native chiefs deprived Lake's army of supplies. "It appears that the whole of India is at stake," wrote Lake to

[7] Owen.

Wellesley. But Ochterlony's splendid defence of Delhi, the swift pursuit of Holkar by Lake with his cavalry, and the victories of Deeg and Futtyghur, destroyed the Mahratta army and saved the campaign. However, the fruits of these successes were lost by the four unsuccessful assaults of Burtpoor. The Rajah submitted and paid a heavy indemnity, but such a submission could not repair the disgraces of the siege. Sindia too, enraged by the loss of Gwalior and Gohud, which he believed himself entitled by the last treaty to retain, and encouraged by Lake's ill success, was again in arms. When urged to retreat to his capital, he replied that his poverty prevented him from making a retrograde movement, and succeeded in obtaining a pecuniary aid to enable him to retire. The treaty of Burtpoor and the advance which it enabled Lake to make against Sindia and Holkar, broke up the alliance, and opened the way for negotiations. In the midst of these negotiations, Wellesley was suddenly superseded by Cornwallis. Wellesley had made up his mind to make considerable concessions in the hope of establishing a settlement of affairs which should secure lasting peace, but he was denied the opportunity of carrying out his designs. The Directors disapproved of the whole course of the Mahratta war, and liked neither the increased expenditure nor the increased dominion. During the administration of Lord Wellesley the debt had increased from £17,000,000 to £31,000,000, and the defect in the annual revenue had grown greater in the same proportion. The extension of territory was contrary to Act of Parliament and to the injunctions of the Directors, but it kept pace with the increased debt. When conquest begins, it is useless to command that it shall go thus far and no further. No great natural barriers separated the English states from the Mahrattas, for the Jumna and the Kistna were lines of demarcation easily overpassed. In the absence of such obstacles, the stronger civilization will encroach on the weaker, and when the tide once sets in it spreads like the sea over flat sands. Some of the independent rulers that remained fretted at the ascendancy that overshadowed them, and their fear and jealousy broke out in hostile confederacies or war. The power of others was but newly founded upon conquest and plunder, so to them successful aggression was a vital necessity. From dread of subjugation or desire of conquest, they came into collision with the English, and wars began which added some thousands of square miles to the territories of the Company. Subsidies unpaid, and treaties contravened, ended in the achievement of the same result in a peaceful manner. While the territorial changes which the Marquis Wellesley effected altered the whole face of India, he left his mark quite as plainly on the English Government. His influence was prolonged through the officers he had trained, and

The siege of Bhurtpore.

The annexation policy.

his ideas lived and moved in Indian politics long after he left Asia. The importance of Wellesley's administration does not lie in the fact that he acquired new dominions for the East India Company, but that he welded together their casual acquisitions into a great whole, and upon the basis which a trading corporation had laid, out of the ruins of an old empire, built up the fabric of a new imperial rule.

Return to England. Pitt.

In January, 1806, the Marquis Wellesley returned to England. Almost his first act after arriving in England was to write to Pitt, and a few days afterwards he saw him at Putney Hill. "I was received by him," writes Wellesley, "with his usual kindness and good humour. His spirits appeared to be as high as ever I had seen them, and his understanding quite as vigorous and clear. But notwithstanding Mr. Pitt's kindness and cheerfulness, I saw that the hand of death was fixed upon him. This melancholy truth was not known nor believed by either his friends or opponents. In the number of the latter, to my deep affliction, I found my highly respected and esteemed friend Lord Grenville, and I collected that measures of the utmost hostility to Mr. Pitt were to be proposed in both Houses at the meeting of Parliament.[1] I warned Lord Grenville of Mr. Pitt's approaching death. He received the fatal intelligence with the utmost feeling, in an agony of tears, and immediately determined that all hostility in Parliament should be suspended. Mr. Pitt's death soon followed.

"I paid the last offices to his honoured memory. We attended him to Westminster Abbey; there the grave of his illustrious father was opened to receive him, and we saw his remains deposited on the coffin of his venerated parent. What grave contains such a father and such a son? what sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory?"

Formation of a new Government.

In the ministerial arrangements which followed Pitt's death, Hawkesbury declined to form a ministry, and it is said that Pitt's remaining colleagues endeavoured to induce Wellesley to take the position of Prime Minister at the head of the existing cabinet, but that he instantly refused. Indeed he could hardly accept, with an impeachment hanging over his head, and if such overtures were made they were not backed by any royal authority. Wellesley himself the day after Pitt's death wrote to Wilberforce and denied the reports respecting himself. He would always venerate and admire Pitt's memory, but he would not lend his hand to sustain any system of administration evidently inadequate to the diffi-

[1] Lord Wellesley informed Lord Colchester that he had Pitt's assurance of being recommended to his Majesty for the highest honours the Crown could bestow. He also stated that the opponents of Pitt's Government intended to attack Pitt through his Indian Administration. Colchester Diaries, ii., 84-87.

culties and dangers of the crisis. "Having no personal object of pursuit, I shall not be deluded from the solemn conviction of my mind that our recent loss cannot be repaired, nor our imminent perils be averted, otherwise than by an union of the approved talents and highest characters of the nation."

Attack on Wellesley.

The Government of all the talents which succeeded Pitt's, protected Lord Wellesley against the anticipated impeachment.[a] Grenville stipulated with Fox that the accusation of Lord Wellesley should not be made a cabinet matter, and that no person should be appointed President of the Board of Control who should promote it in his official capacity. Fox assented, but reserved the right of supporting the accusation if it were brought forward by a private member.[b]

The attack made in Parliament upon Lord Wellesley's Indian policy was more vexatious than serious. Owing to the arrangement described, no support was given to it by the Government. It was expected that Francis would be the prime mover in the impeachment of Wellesley, and he had early in 1804 shown some eagerness to begin hostilities. But when the charges were made in Parliament, though he attacked Wellesley's conduct, he refused to impeach him. "I will never be concerned in impeaching anybody. The impeachment of Mr. Hastings has cured me of that folly. I was tried and he was acquitted." Mr. Paull brought in a condemnatory resolution in April, 1806, but Fox opposed it and it had to be withdrawn. Paull, however, persevered, and in May other charges were brought forward. They were founded on the transactions in Oude, the appointment of Henry Wellesley to be Lieutenant Governor of that province; and among the articles was one charging the Governor General with having spent too much public money on his private luxury and ostentation. During the debates to which they gave rise, an interesting comparison was drawn between the Marquis and Napoleon. One speaker said that the Princes of India were "forced to receive British garrisons, and kept in greater subjection in their own capitals than the Kings of Wurtemburg and Bavaria by the Emperor of France." "The conduct of the Governor General to the Rajah of Burtpoor," said another orator, was "an act of singular and most sanguinary vengeance, and without example in ancient or modern times, unless in the recent instance of Buonaparte and the King of Naples." Mr. Paull observed that Wellesley "had revolutionised the nature of the mild Hindoo and excited a thirst

Charges.

[a] A banquet was given to Wellesley at Willis' Rooms soon after his return from India. The list of those present shows by whom he was supported. Colchester, ii. 46.

[b] Fox's death made some change in Wellesley's position. Lord Howick inclined to drop the subject, and leave the question of Wellesley's conduct to the East Indian Judicature. Wyndham remained the most notable among those who wished to press the attack. Colchester, ii., 84.

for blood unknown before." Against these attacks Wellesley was stoutly defended by his brother Arthur, who entered Parliament for that purpose. In the elections which took place in October, 1806, Mr. Paull lost his seat, and shortly afterwards put an end to his life. In consequence of his absence, Lord Folkestone took up the attack with a series of resolutions, aiming not at impeachment but with a view to a vote of censure. They were, however, lost by a majority of 181, and a counter resolution by Sir John Anstruther, the late Chief Justice of Bengal, approved of the arrangements in Oude. In the month of May, 1808, Sir Thomas Turton brought forward a motion charging Wellesley with the death of the Nabob of the Carnatic, and that also was defeated and answered by a vote of approbation.

Overtures to Wellesley.

In March, 1807, when the Grenville Government fell, an attempt was made to incorporate Lord Wellesley in the Cabinet, and he was offered the Foreign Office. But the Marquis was under such obligations to Lord Grenville that he could hardly take advantage of his misfortunes. He waited for a day or two till he could see Lord Grenville, and wavered, but finally refused, and the post was occupied by Canning. He promised, however, to support the Government, and received the garter as the reward of his adhesion.

The Copenhagen Expedition.

In September the expedition to Copenhagen took place, and no one was more vigorous in its defence than Wellesley. "The principle of the great law of nature and nations was clearly applicable to the case before their Lordships. Here was an instrument of war within the grasp of our inveterate enemy: we interposed and seized it: and this act of energy and wisdom was to have the hard names of rapine and impiety ascribed to it. To show that injury had been done to an innocent party in a transaction was not to prove its iniquity. All war had the effect to involve in its horrors the helpless and innocent; but it was not on that account necessarily unjust. Let any man say how war could be conducted without it. As neutral individuals might be sacrificed in the common calamity, so also might neutral nations." He rejoiced in the defeat of Napoleon. "On one occasion, at least, fortune had not attended his chariot wheels, and in the prosecution of his most favourite project he had been humbled and disappointed."

Spain.

In the winter of 1808, occurred Napoleon's expedition into Spain, and the retreat of Sir John Moore, which ended in his death at Corunna. This event and the convention of Antra had created a general discouragement in the Cabinet, and the division between Canning and Castlereagh had already begun. In the spring, the necessity for greater efforts in Spain caused the post of Ambassador to that country to be offered to the Marquis Wellesley, while

Wellesley appointed Spanish Ambassador.

his brother was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Peninsula. The Marquis had already formed strong opinions about the necessity of a vigorous prosecution of the war, and the *Times* hailed his appointment as "a pledge given by the ministers that they were resolved to adopt no half measures, to pursue no system of cold or timid precaution, to leave no outlets for irresolution or vacillation." He had scarcely accepted the office when he learnt that the armament being collected was destined for the Scheldt and not for the Tagus; at once he offered his resignation, but Canning persuaded him to reconsider it, and finally to undertake the Embassy. On the first of August he arrived at Cadiz, and as he was preparing to land received the news of Talavera. But the hopes which this raised were soon destroyed by the condition in which he found the English army and the Spanish government. "I had not been many days in Seville before I learnt that his Majesty's army had been defrauded of every necessary support, that his Majesty's wounded soldiers had been abandoned to the mercy of the enemy: that the Spanish Generals instead of co-operation had displayed a systematic spirit of counteraction, and had disconcerted every plan and operation which they were appointed to support: and that his Majesty's General (after having compelled the enemy to retreat from a British force of far inferior numbers) had been himself compelled to retreat from the country which he had saved, lest his troops should perish by famine and disease."

Some of the Spanish Generals were notoriously disaffected. and could not be controlled by the Government. For the conduct of others, it seemed impossible to imagine any rational motive, unless they arranged their operations with the French instead of the British General. As for the Government itself, the Junta, it had no energy, and no authority, and not even popular good-will to support it: its constitution united the contradictory inconveniences of every known form of government without possessing the advantages of any. "It was the spring of all the jealousy against all the British and the allies, and its powerlessness was the cause of the weakness, confusion, and disorder which reigned in the administration of Spain."

Attempts at Reform.

The Marquis made repeated attempts to secure from the Spanish Ministers some measures to remedy these defects. He pressed upon them the establishment of a definite system of transport and supply, and urged co-operation in a plan of defensive operations. He received assurances that orders had been given for the accomplishment of these objects, and promises that they should all be carried out at once. To the request for the systematic establishment of magazines, the Secretary of the Junta replied by a number of rules about storekeeping and account books, the management

of depôts not yet established, and the distribution of provisions never collected. At the same time reports were circulated that the want of subsistence was only a pretext. When the Marquis complained that the Spanish Generals would not co-operate with his brother, he received an elaborate statement of the orders given, with a dignified rebuke for supposing that they were not obeyed. But it was impossible that this could continue without fatal consequences, so General Wellesley announced his intention of retiring into Portugal. On the 18th of August, he communicated his intention to the Junta, who received it with the utmost alarm. They declared that it meant immediate ruin to the government and to the cause of Spain, and besought the Marquis to prevent it. He accordingly expostulated again with the Junta, and seeing the consequences which the retreat might cause, asked his brother to consider the possibility of adopting an intermediate plan, which might combine some of the advantages of a return to Portugal without endangering the foundations of the alliance between Spain and Great Britain. But the General, seeing that in spite of the promises of the Junta the sufferings of the army were in no way alleviated, and hearing of no practical plan for their relief, and expecting none, commenced to retire towards Portugal, and the Marquis approved of his decision.

The Retreat.

The constitutional reforms which Wellesley advised to the Government were important. The immediate convocation of the Cortes, the nomination of a Council of Regency to act in the interval, the preparation of business for the consideration of the Cortes by the Junta, the redress of the grievances of the Colonies, and the extension of a share in the representative body to them. The first two of these measures were in a short time adopted, and after the Colonies had commenced their revolt, their right to representation was recognised in the Constitution of 1812.

Constitutional Reforms.

In September, 1809, the resignation of Canning took place, and the disclosure to Castlereagh of the intrigue which had been going on against him. Canning, dissatisfied with Castlereagh's method of carrying on the war, had in April communicated his opinion to Portland, and threatened resignation unless some change was made. He suggested Wellesley as a substitute, and the arrangement was agreed to by the Duke and sanctioned by the King. It was intended that Castlereagh should be immediately informed; but that intention was not carried out, and the two resignations

Intrigues leading to Wellesley's recall.

[a] The authorities used for Wellesley ministry, 1809-1812, and the intrigues at its close, are: Mem. in Wellington's Supplementary Despatches, vol. vii., 257-288; Court and Cabinet of George III.; Malmesbury Diaries; the articles on the Percival Government, &c., by G. C. Lewis, in the Edinburgh Review, 1858; Parliamentary Debates, &c.

and a duel were the consequence. Percival endeavoured to persuade Grey and Grenville to join him, but both refused, nor could he obtain the adhesion of any of Sidmouth's friends. Percival was therefore obliged to assume the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and a temporary government was formed till Wellesley should reply to the invitation to join them which had been made. There had been some idea of his being head of the administration, but that was soon abandoned, and he was offered the War Office or the Foreign Office, which were pending his arrival occupied by Palmerston and Bathurst. The offer was made through his friends, and they accepted for him the Foreign Office.[d] His accession had been regarded as essential to the life and permanency of the government, and the belief that he would be able to exercise a preponderating influence with regard to the war led him to accept the offer.[e] For he had resolved that the policy to be carried out abroad was the concentration of all England's efforts upon the Peninsula, and with the purpose of carrying out that idea he entered the cabinet. The first difficulty of the government was the attack upon the Walcheren expedition which met them. Wellesley did good service to the administration by persuading the reluctant Lord Chatham to resign, and to an inquiry, but he took no part in the defence of the expedition. His opinions had been so strongly expressed against it, that he could not with any show of decency defend it. But his colleagues regarded this almost as a desertion on his part, certainly as an abandonment of the commanding position which he held when he entered amongst them. The consequences of this assault on the government and its narrow escape from an overthrow upon this question were a schism in the cabinet, and some talk of Percival's resignation.[f] It is said that the fall of the government was anticipated by Lord Wellesley, who expected to be called upon to form a new cabinet, and that he had already prepared his plan for a new administration. It is certain that there was a strong party prepared to accept him as leader, and the representatives of a section of Parliament which included nearly all the Irish members and a considerable number of the English made overtures to him for the formation of a Wellesley party, which was to support the government in a body. But Wellesley refused to attempt the formation of a regular party for himself, and tried to strengthen the government and his own position in it by other means. He was under some obligation to support the claims of Canning, owing to the arrangement for himself which had terminated so fatally for his friend. He was not, however, bound by any promise or engagement whatever, but

The Foreign Office.

Walcheren Expedition.

Canning.

[d] Colonel Shaw's Memorandum, Wellington's Supplementary Despatches, vii., 257.
[e] Colonel Shaw's Memorandum. [f] Ibid.

only by sentiment; and he determined that if any attempt was made to introduce Castlereagh into the ministry an offer must be made to Canning also.

In June, 1810, proposals were made for the incorporation of Sidmouth, Canning, and Castlereagh. But, as both Sidmouth and Castlereagh refused to serve with Canning, and as Wellesley would not consent to any arrangement which did not admit him, while the ministry did not think the accession of Canning alone desirable, the negotiations came to nothing. Meanwhile the Marquis had been struggling in vain to carry out his views on foreign affairs against the opposition of his colleagues. At the beginning of the year, when the gloom of the Walcheren expedition had cast a shadow of despondency over all the counsels of the government, Perceval had even proposed the withdrawal of the army from the Peninsula. Though he gave up this idea in consequence of Wellesley's opposition, and the subsidence of the alarm which had caused his proposal, he did not resolve to carry on the war with vigour. Wellesley, however, never ceased to urge upon the Cabinet and Parliament the necessity of continuing the operations in Spain, and supporting them with all the strength of England. In January he defended against the animadversions of Lord Grey the vote of thanks to his brother for the victory of Talavera. In February he pressed the conclusion of a convention with Portugal, and the carrying out of his brother's plan of taking thirty thousand Portuguese soldiers into the British service. He defended Frere's despatches and their publication by the government; he defended his brother's conduct of the campaign, and supported the grant to the sufferers from the invasion of Portugal. At the end of May he was involved in a three days' quarrel with his colleagues about the adoption of more vigorous measures.[s] He would have resigned on the second day if his friends had not strongly represented to him that he ought not to desert the cause (for such would have been the practical effect of his resignation) which his brother was upholding in Spain, and that he ought to give his fellow ministers a further trial. A few days later he made a splendid protest against the abandonment of the Spanish cause. "With the fate of Spain the fate of England is now inseparably blended. I shall not cease to recommend to my sovereign to continue to assist Spain to the latest moment of her existence. It should not dishearten us that Spain appears to be in the very crisis of her fate; we should on the contrary extend a more anxious care over her at a moment so critical. For in nations, and above all in Spain, how often have the apparent symptoms of dissolution been the presages of new life and of renovated vigour? Therefore would I cling to Spain in her last struggle,

Spain.

[s] Shaw's Mem.

therefore I would watch her last agonies, I would wash and heal her wounds, I would receive her parting breath, I would catch and cherish the last vital spark of her expiring patriotism.

> "'Date, vulnera lymphis,
> Abluam, et extremus si quis super halitus errat
> Ore legam.'"

But the ministers in answer to his appeal for greater efforts replied, first, that to send more troops was impracticable, the resources of England were not sufficient; and, secondly, that General Wellesley did not want any more troops. The opinions of the Marquis were overruled, and he resolved that he would not deceive the nation by staying longer in office, and sanctioning thereby the conduct of the war, and at the end of the session he had determined to resign before Parliament met again in the spring of 1811.

On another important matter of policy also the Marquis Wellesley differed seriously from his colleagues. The absolute interdiction of all commerce with Great Britain had been answered by England with a modified prohibition of French trade, forbidding all such commerce with France and countries under French influence as could not be carried on through Great Britain. The subsequent modifications of the system which the original orders in Council laid down, had been, wherever possible and safe, directed to the regulation and encouragement of the trade of neutrals through Great Britain. The system had been justified by the perseverance of France in enforcing the decrees, and it had been declared by England that whenever the Emperor restored neutral commerce to its old freedom England would repeal the orders in Council. American trade had been seriously injured, and a hostile spirit had been provoked by this policy. In August, 1810, Napoleon revoked the Berlin decrees, but the repeal was contingent upon two conditions. The first was that England should not only repeal the orders in Council, but renounce her system and principles of blockade. The second required from America, that in the event that England did not accept that condition she should compel her rights to be respected by the English. The result was that in the negotiations which took place between Wellesley and Mr. Pinckney the American Minister, a demand was made not only for the repeal of the orders in Council, but also for the revocation of the blockade of 1806, and thereby the renunciation of England's general system and principles of blockade. Wellesley replied, on behalf of the British Government, that such a conditional repeal of the Berlin decrees was not the effectual and unqualified abandonment of them upon which alone the government of England could revoke the orders in Council, and that Great Britain refused to relinquish the

The Orders in Council.

ancient and established rules of maritime law, the principles of blockade upon which her strength was based. Personally, Wellesley considered the orders as legal and proper when they were first enacted, but he considered that they were not applicable to affairs as they now stood, and were inexpedient with regard to England. But he submitted his private judgment to the sense of the majority of the Cabinet, and framed his answer to Pinckney accordingly. On the subject of England's conduct in Sicily, and on the necessity of concession to the Catholics, he also differed from Perceval. "At length Lord Wellesley came to the conclusion that the narrow view Mr. Perceval took of foreign politics, which he ascribed to his having taken up the trade at a late period of life, was an incurable evil, that it was the source of of all the opposition he had met with, and that the subjection of the Cabinet to Mr. Perceval's opinions had become so strong that argument and persuasion on his part were only waste of time."[h] Accordingly he went down to Brighton at the end of the session in a "calm and dejected temper of mind," taking with him the work upon which he was then engaged, in order to make a clean sweep of the business on hand, that he might be ready to transfer the papers of the Foreign Office to his successor as soon as possible, and longing for that time as "the hour of deliverance." In September began that illness of the King's which terminated in his permanent insanity, and when Parliament unexpectedly came together in November the position of affairs was greatly changed. The resolutions on the Regency which Perceval brought forward aroused so much opposition that the stability of the government was endangered, and the fall of the government while the King was incapable and the royal authority in abeyance would have been a grave constitutional misfortune. If Wellesley deserted the Cabinet at such a moment, the loss of his name would greatly weaken it, and it would appear also that he was ratting to the Prince of Wales. So he stayed in the government and supported the imposition of the restrictions on the Regent. The general revival on the Continent and the successes in Spain induced him to remain through the whole of 1811, and there was an additional reason to wait, because it was universally believed that when the restrictions on the power of the Regent should expire, at the beginning of 1812, he would at once turn out the Perceval government. During the latter months of 1811, Wellesley was in familiar intercourse with the Regent, and reports were circulated that he expected that the Prince would on the expiration of the restrictions ask him to form a government.[i] However, in the con-

Wellesley determines to quit the Government.

The King's illness.

The Regent.

[h] Shaw's Mem.

[i] Ibid.—The truth of this report is denied in the statement which was sent to the Duke of Wellington.

versations which Wellesley had with the Regent on the absorbing topic of the new government he confined himself to recommending that he should adhere to the friends to whom he had pledged himself, and carry on the war with vigour. For himself, the Marquis expected to be out of office. When the Catholic question came to be discussed, and Wellesley endeavoured to persuade the Prince to concession, and the Prince said that knowing the king's opposition he would not do anything during his father's lifetime, "You cannot refuse to listen to the Catholics," replied Wellesley, "if you create Peers and give away the garter; the same reasoning applies to both."

With reference to the Bill on the Household, Wellesley protested against Perceval's plan, and for once entered his protest in the form of a minute. But the disagreement between himself and his colleagues could no longer be endured by him, and on the 16th of January he tendered his resignation, but informed both the Regent and Perceval that he would remain in office till the end of the restrictions or till they had provided a successor. He requested, however, that the Prime Minister would give him timely notice to quit, and that the arrangement should be kept a secret. Perceval thanked him for the way in which he had signified his wish to retire, and assented to his wishes. In the few days which intervened before the date when the restrictions on the Regent were to be removed, the Prince attempted to form a united Cabinet, consisting of the men still in office, and Grenville, Grey, and the leaders of the Opposition. The offer was made through a letter to the Duke of York, expressing the gratification the Prince would feel if some of those persons with whom the early habits of his life were formed would strengthen his hands and constitute a part of the government. But Grey and Grenville, considering the wide difference between their opinions and those of the existing Cabinet, seeing that the offer was only indirect, and believing also that it was insincere, refused. During these days Perceval had been negotiating for the admission of Castlereagh into the post Wellesley was going to resign, but he had not warned Wellesley as he had promised to do. The Prince, however, refused to sanction the arrangement, and informed Wellesley, who wished to resign at once. With some difficulty the Prince prevailed upon him to wait for a few days. On the following day, Wellesley sent through Eldon an angry message to Perceval, that his recent conduct towards himself had been indecent, unmannerly, disrespectful, and contrary to the tenor of his professions: but that when out of office he would cease to feel any resentment towards him from gratitude at being relieved from the degrading situation of serving under him. Wellesley did not wait long after this, but made his way to the Prince and handed in his resignation. During the audience he earnestly begged the Prince not to form a government on the

principle of maintaining the Catholic disabilities, which would be the case if he continued the present ministry under Perceval. His own opinion on their claims he had expressed on the 31st of January, on the occasion of Earl Fitzwilliam's motion for an inquiry into the state of Ireland. Though he defended the government against the hostility of the motion, he took the opportunity of expressing his views upon the religious disabilities, and the position of the Catholics.

"Already possessing great political power, but separated from the state by special exclusions and restraints: individual ambition extinguished: individual interest abridged: uninfluenced by the government: exercising an influence which the government can neither extend nor diminish: disassociated from all the establishments civil, military, and religious, but yet holding an intrinsic weight which occasionally presses upon every establishment—what must be the operation of such a body upon the frame of any state? It must be prejudicial to public order and tranquillity, because its action is not coincident with the ordinary movements of the state, not regulated by the same principles nor directed to the same ends. It would appear to be wisdom in any state to endeavour to associate such a body with the ordinary operations of the established government, by infusing the same principles of connection which unite and harmonise all the parts of the community, and which are the peculiar strength and beauty of the British Constitution. It was not so much a question whether additional political power should be given to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, as whether they should be refused those appendages to their present political power which would identify its exercise with the interests of the state, and would constitute the bonds and pledges of attachment to the government and the ties of union with the commonwealth."

Again on the 21st of April, when Lord Donoughmore made his motion for a committee to enquire into the Catholic claims, Wellesley made a long speech in which he set forth his views with reference to the connection of Church and State and the limits of lawful interference of government in religious matters. He had the satisfaction of gaining the object of the motion—a consideration of the question by Parliament. But the circumstances connected with Wellesley's resignation, the element of intrigue and mystery in which it was involved, required some explanation, and it was asked for in Parliament. A favourable opportunity occurred in the shape of Lord Boringdon's motion on the state of the nation. It was well known that Wellesley would speak and make some revelations, and the House of Lords was crowded accordingly. Wellesley came down early to the House and heard Boringdon make a long speech, and rose to reply to him when he concluded. But the Chancellor's eye was resting on some one else, and he was obliged to sit still for three

hours listening to a personal squabble between Lord Selkirk and Lord Boringdon. At the end of that time he felt himself unable to speak, for the place was very hot and he was tired and unwell, so he withdrew from the House without having spoken. This was a great shock to his reputation, for it was assumed that he was afraid to confront his late colleagues, and Canning told him that he walked into the House the greatest man in England and walked out of it the least. Lord Wellesley said that this was an exaggeration both ways, but admitted that his silence had been harmful, and determined to seize the next opportunity. Some statement of the position of the Marquis in the Cabinet and his reasons for leaving it had been drawn up from words he let fall in conversation. It was not meant for the public eye nor couched in the language of an official document. It was meant to be shown to the friends of the Marquis and to political allies, but a copy unfortunately fell into the hands of the Editor of the *Times* and was at once published. In the interval between the composition of this document and its publication the assassination of Perceval occurred. The charges made in this paper against him acquired a very odious aspect from the event of his death. It seemed like insulting his memory. It had consequences fatal to the political negotiations which Lord Wellesley was carrying on at the time. On Perceval's death the remainder of the Cabinet deliberated whether to seek the adhesion of Wellesley and Canning or Grey and Grenville. They decided to ask Canning and Wellesley, but the one declined on account of the Catholic claims and the other on the ground of the claims and their war policy. Mr. Stuart Wortley now succeeded in carrying an address for the formation of a strong ministry. The Regent commanded Wellesley to prepare a plan for such a government, but though he authorised negotiations he would only communicate indirectly with the Whig leaders. But Wellesley was only the emissary of the Regent, not the Prime Minister. Liverpool and his colleagues refused the offer which Wellesley made to them on the foundation of a spirited prosecution of the war and the concession of the Catholic claims. They answered that they did not think it necessary to consider the principles stated in the proposition, as they were all resolved not to enter further into the discussion as a matter of personal feeling. He applied to Grey and Grenville. They expressed a warm support of the claims, and a cold and qualified opinion on the war. They added that it did not appear that there was any authority from the Prince to communicate with them, and therefore they did not consider themselves as entered into negotiations for making an administration. The Regent now gave Wellesley a definite commission to propose a government headed by himself, containing Canning, Erskine, and Moira; Grey and Grenville were to recommend four other names if the Cabinet was to be twelve,

five if thirteen was the number to be decided upon. They refused again, on the ground that it was a system of counteraction inconsistent with the prosecution of any uniform and beneficial policy. Moira now tried in vain to form a government with himself as Prime Minister, and he also failed. Throughout the whole of these proceedings the Whigs believed the Regent insincere, and Wellesley and Moira the dupes of a secret management. Wellesley himself declared that the main cause of his failure was that he placed too much confidence in the firmness, integrity, and public spirit of the Prince Regent. Accordingly, the old government remained in power, and Wellesley and Canning in opposition, with their adherents. By the dissolution of July, 1812, the government and not their opponents were injured, and the little party gained four more seats, which raised their numbers in the House of Commons to twenty-two. But the union was not lasting, for in 1813 Canning formally disbanded his party and left his followers. Some said the step "pointed to government;" but whatever the motive, the result was a permanent political separation between Canning and Wellesley, and the complete isolation of the latter. During the period of this alliance the Marquis devoted his eloquence to urging again the Catholic claims, and to attacking the method in which the war was prosecuted both with America and in Spain.[j] In April, 1813, the question of the renewal of the East India Company's charter came before Parliament, and Wellesley opposed the resolutions of the government on the subject. He considered and said in his speech that the Company were the best organ for administering India, and that the continuance of their monopolies was the only way to preserve to them their political power. "Yet I have always thought," he added, "that the power of the executive government at home over the executive government of the Company is deficient both in strength and promptitude, and that the Company's administrative power would derive strength and dignity from the influence of the Crown."

The Congress of Vienna.

The criticisms of Lord Wellesley on the peace of Fontainbleau were just, but they were made too late for any practical purpose. The system which the powers at Vienna had established, said Lord Wellesley, was in many particulars a system of gross injustice.[k] "It appeared that those nations only were to be respected who were powerful, and that the others were to be thrown into a consolidated fund of spoliation, to be paid by he knew not what cashier

[j] During the debate on the vote of thanks for Salamanca he made some remarks about his brother which deserve quotation:—"If I were called on to give my impartial testimony to his merits, I would not select his victories, brilliant though they have been: I would go to the moments when difficulties pressed and crowded upon him, when he had but the choice of extremities, when he was overhung by superior strength. It is to his retreats I would go."

[k] Debates, April 7th, 12th, 27th, 1815.

to the orders of the greater sovereigns. He could not conceive that a note to pay to the order of the Emperor of Russia, or some other monarch, ten millions of souls, or so many thousand souls, was a valid transfer of independent states." When the question of war with France in 1815 was debated,

The war of 1815.

he was one of the few who opposed it. He declared that a war to impose upon the free people of France any particular government was both inexpedient and unjust. The people considered the Bourbons as agents in the hands of foreign powers which had made them instruments of degradation and injustice to the French nation, and their downfall was the consequence of this feeling. For he had now quite lost that distrust of France and her rulers which he had exhibited in 1794. He believed it possible to continue at peace with France even though it was ruled by Napoleon, and that both people and ruler were entirely changed in their feelings.

The policy of the Holy Alliance.

For some time after this, Lord Wellesley relapsed into silence, but in 1817 he again attacked the system which the Congress had established, and the policy which the Holy Alliance, with the consent of the English ministers, was carrying out.[1] England had extinguished Jacobinism and waged a successful war for liberty, justice, and the rights of nations. But the unjust settlement which followed the peace had outraged these principles, and had raised up at home and abroad the spirit of discontent and revolution. "It was a peace never equalled in the production of more cruel wrongs, a settlement that had directly and with every disregard of justice laid prostrate every principle that heretofore characterised the law of nations, that transferred nations without regard to sympathy and interest, that tied peoples together not even connected by the most remote affection. When these things happened, then it was that the subdued spirit which had so long desolated the earth again arose,—then it was that Jacobinism spoke again, and had something to speak at, and hydra-headed resumed its pristine strength."

Nor was he less active in urging on the ministers the immediate necessity of lightening taxation and preventing by timely economy the rise of discontent at home.[m] In 1816, he supported with all his eloquence the Marquis of Lansdowne's motion against the maintenance of such large military establishments in a time of peace. The heavy taxation which they caused checked the productive powers of capital, and sapped commerce. Peace needed no such armour. "Economy approaching even to parsimony was the panoply of peace."[n] This peace was heavier than actual war. "Let others praise the patience of the people of England in war, he would

The state of England.

[1] Debates, Feb., 1817. [m] Ibid., March 15th, 1816. [n] Ibid., April 5, 1816.

applaud their conduct in peace,—the magnanimity with which they had borne not the continuance of the war but the breaking out of the peace. Pressed down by a thousand distresses, aggravated by a thousand insinuations that the rich were shaking off their burthens upon the poor, and that the poor were to become victims to the luxury of the great, tempted by a thousand schemes of pretended benefit to divert their attention from the main question, the people of England had with a steady eye watched the progress of designs against their happiness. As in war nothing could withdraw them from an undaunted view of the dangers that surrounded them, so in peace nothing could compel them to lose sight of the primary source of all their sufferings, lavish expenditure in all the public establishments: they demanded that when the relations of peace were restored the expenditure of war should not be continued." With like vigour he assaulted the great military establishment which the government still thought it necessary to keep up in Ireland.° "The British government was there with a sharp sword in one hand and laws sharper than the sword in the other. Such a force was not needed to protect Ireland from foreign invasion; he supposed it was meant to superintend the education of one generation and the executions of another: a soldier was to be at once the teacher of refined morals and civil justice. The army was employed unconstitutionally against the people by the advisers of the people."

Ireland.

Keeping in view this one end, the alleviation of the national distress, Wellesley opposed the Corn Laws of 1815 and protested when they were passed; and again in 1817, with Grey and eighteen others, protested against the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The national discontent soon took shape in the agitation for Parliamentary Reform, and this question led to a separation between Wellesley and the remainder of the Liberal opposition.

In their views about economy and civil liberty he agreed with them, but the same political theory which led him to oppose Grey's motion for reform in 1793 came between them now. "It was the peculiar character of our constitution that it contained within it the three great principles of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, blended together so intimately and yet so inexplicably, that the Crown had no strength except in connection with the aristocracy and the people, the aristocracy was nothing except connected with the Crown and the people, and the people were powerless if independent of the Crown and the aristocracy." What the reformers wanted was "to dissolve this mysterious union," to make the House of Commons the organ of a democracy: "the very statement of reform so understood was revolution." While

Parliamentary Reform.

° March 15th, 1816. Debate.

Wellesley differed from Grey and his followers on the question of reform, he differed also from Liverpool and the Cabinet about the way to treat the reformers. "Do I say that because the reformers are in error they ought to be silenced? Do I say that your Lordships ought to check an Englishman's best privilege, the right of talking and speaking about his government? Do I recommend your Lordships to employ coercion to repress the mistakes of opinion? Oh no, my Lords, your Lordships are assembled here for better and nobler purposes. Do not invest yourselves in the solemn robes of judges, still less assume the austere office of punishers of the people's errors; but exercise as you ought the grander and more constitutional function of redressing the people's wrongs." Wellesley did not believe in the right of the people to a better representation, and therefore did not believe that the refusal of it was a real grievance. He thought the reform movement merely a factitious agitation drawing its life from the general distress which heavy taxation caused.

Attack on the Ministers for their treatment of the Reformers.

For this the ministers were responsible, and their method of dealing with it was in the highest degree impolitic. Instead of removing the cause of discontent by economy and retrenchment, they aggravated it by needless measures of repression, and by their employment of informers in order to get something tangible to repress they produced the outbreaks they punished. The Spa fields riots of December, 1817, in particular were an instance of this policy on the part of the government, and for his share in them through his spies, Wellesley ridiculed Addington as almost an accomplice of the rioters. He pictured the noble viscount receiving a deputation,—in fact the principal agitator,—with all the courtesy for which he was distinguished, and his hand upon his heart. Then the same agent opening the proceedings at the meeting as if it had been convoked in the name and on the behalf of the noble Secretary for the Home Department, with a correspondence which he stated he was authorized by the Secretary of State to communicate. Finally he described the battle of Skinner's Alley and the bold manœuvre by which the advanced division of the conspirators headed by a drunken surgeon and a shoemaker were signally defeated in the earlier part of the campaign under the auspices of Field-Marshal Viscount Sidmouth. But the agitation grew more and more important and dangerous; reform clubs were established all over the country, and in 1819 Burdett brought the question into Parliament. In 1818, Wellesley united himself more closely with the Grenville party, and in January, 1819, there were great expectations of a government defeat which might bring that party into power. But at the same time he announced that he should support the government in opposition to the reform agitators, and blamed Sidmouth for his want

On the side of the Ministers, 1819.

of vigour. Accordingly, when, after the Peterloo massacre, the Marquis of Lansdowne brought forward a motion hostile to the government, he supported them, and took a great share in securing for their side the voice of Plunkett.[p] It was the aid which that party afforded which prevented the fall of the government. In Wellesley's mind a scornful hatred of the reformers had taken the place of contemptuous toleration.[q] "Such an alteration in the constitution of Parliament as they proposed, would result in the destruction of all regular government, all religion, all private property. . . . The meetings of the reformers were a wretched Babel: they were a set of vagabonds whom it would be a prostitution of language to call the people of England. Violence must be coerced, and sedition extinguished by law."

In 1820, when King George IV. ascended the throne, there were reports that he had charged Wellesley to attempt the formation of a government, but they were apparently without foundation, and are only valuable as showing public opinion.

Wellesley appointed to Ireland.

In 1821, however, when Sidmouth retired, Peel and the Grenvillites joined the government, and when Talbot resigned the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, Wellesley was appointed his successor.[r]

Ireland, at the time when the Marquis Wellesley was appointed Lord Lieutenant, was in a very dangerous condition. For fifteen years it had suffered from a severe repressive policy and the strictest application of the principle of Protestant ascendancy. From time to time the head of the government had been changed, but the system of administration and the spirit which inspired it still remained the same. Saurin, a bigoted opponent of the Catholic claims, filled during these years the post of Solicitor General, and held all the real power in his hands. While the war lasted it had been necessary to maintain a large army in Ireland, and when the peace came it brought no healing measures, and the same "oblivious antidote" was still applied to the grievances of that country. After the great defeat of the Catholic Relief Bill in 1813, the question had been disregarded, but it rose again, and the hopes of the Catholics rose with it. In 1819, the House of Commons rejected Grattan's motion by a majority of only two votes, and when he died Plunkett stepped into his place as parliamentary leader of the Catholic cause. Immediately after his accession George IV. visited Ireland, showed some favour to the Catholic leaders, and uttered words which seemed to mean

State of Ireland.

[p] Court and Cabinet of the Regency, ii.

[q] Marquis of Lansdowne's motion on the state of the country, November 30th, 1819.

[r] Sheil's Sketches of the Irish Bar, Sheil's and O'Connell's Speeches, O'Connell's Life by his Son, Plunkett's Life, Court and Cabinets of George IV., Wellington's Despatches 1819-25, Pearce's Wellesley, Wyse's Catholic Association, are the chief authorities I have used.

that he favoured their claims.[s] The ministerial letter which closed the King's visit seemed to confirm the hopes which his behaviour had excited, and deluded even O'Connell into premature raptures.[t] "It seems," he wrote, "to be the harbinger of better feelings and better days." These hopes were heightened by the successful passage of Plunkett's Relief Bill through the Commons, and destroyed by its rejection among the Lords. Again the angry Catholics had to bear, in the words of their leader, "the tantalising and bitter repetition of hopes raised only to be blasted, and prospects of success opened to close upon them in tenfold darkness." This was the great political grievance which the Marquis had to face, and it was complicated by a variety of social and economical difficulties. The wretched condition of the peasantry, aggravated by the exactions of land agents and tithe proctors, was the natural source of disaffection and lawlessness. A network of secret societies spread over Ireland, and open outrages disturbed Munster and the South. Houses were fired night after night; magistrates were robbed of arms and horses; tithe property was attacked and destroyed; and bodies of armed men encountered the troops. Yet though the rioters were all peasants, and though the peasantry in that part of Ireland were all Catholic, these outbreaks were distinctly agrarian and not religious in their causes. The Catholic clergy took no share in promoting them, and the Catholic gentry were as much exposed to attack and as active in suppressing the disorders as the Protestants. The upper classes sought to break the yoke of the Protestant ascendancy, the lower classes rebelled against tithes and landowners. There was as yet no union among the Catholics to secure their political aims.

Reception of Wellesley.

The appointment of Wellesley was received by the Catholics as "a measure of conciliation" and a sign that their claims would be granted, but the Orangemen took it as an omen of the downfall of the Protestant ascendancy.[u] So while Dublin was illuminated and addresses were moved by Sheil and O'Connell, though the Corporation presented an address and the Mayor gave a banquet, there was still a feeling among the Protestants which would render the smallest concession to the Catholics a matter of great difficulty.

Composition of the Government.

The government of which the Marquis was at the head, was so composed that it gave the Catholics much hope, but so constituted that it could really effect very little. Saurin was replaced by Plunkett as Solicitor General, and Bushe soon took the post of Chief Justice. On the

[s] Alison's Description.—
"My heart," said the King, "has always been Irish since the first day it beat," and this and other "felicitous expressions diffused universal enchantment."

[t] O'Connell's Life by his Son, ii., 344.

[u] v. Sheil's Irish Sketches, vol i., p. 367.

other hand, Goulburn the chief Secretary, Manners the Chancellor, Joy the Solicitor General, and the whole staff of permanent officials, would exert all their obstructive powers against concession. "By these means," said Lord Grenville, "counteraction was studiously provided to embarrass Wellesley in all his operations."

Wellesley's Policy.

The Lord Lieutenant at once distinctly announced the policy he intended to pursue.[v] In his speech at the Mayor's banquet he laid great stress on his desire to alleviate the practical evils of Ireland.[w] In his reply to the address which the Catholics of Clare presented to him, he told the Irish Catholics that he came to administer the laws and not to alter them. The measures by which Lord Wellesley attempted to meet these practical evils met with some success. The famine which was raging in Galway and the West was subdued by the expenditure of half a million which the government advanced, and by a subscription of a quarter of a million raised in England. The outrages which disturbed the South of Ireland were suppressed by the application of the Insurrection Act to Cork, Limerick, and Clare.[x] A Bill was prepared and brought into Parliament, which effected some readjustment of the tithe system, and a survey of Ireland was undertaken on which a permanent reform in that system could be based.[y] To secure impartial justice, Wellesley revised the Commission of the Peace, and struck out the names of all those who were too much infected by party spirit. To prevent the autocratic and irresponsible way in which individual magistrates were accustomed to retail the law, he instituted regular and frequent Petty Sessions in many counties.[z] In addition to these measures, he improved the police, and endeavoured to effect some economies in the administration. This was the work of three years; and at the end of that time, Lord Wellesley was enabled to write to Liverpool and describe his success with pardonable pride. "Tranquillity is generally, if not universally restored. Every measure,—Insurrection Act, Tithe Bill, Revision of Magistracy, Petty Sessions, better administration of the law, has succeeded beyond my most sanguine hopes. The general prosperity of the Empire begins to reach Ireland. Prices have improved, rents and even tithes are better paid, and in the districts which had been most disturbed, the people are turning their attention to pursuits of industry and honest labour, instead of plotting or executing schemes of outrage and violence. In short, I should have been able at the opening of Parliament, to present the gratifying tribute of Ireland tranquillised to his Majesty, were not the general prosperity and happiness disturbed by the noisy fury of the

[v] Sheil's Sketches, 372. [w] O'Connell, ii., 374.

[x] v. Life of Chief Justice Blackburne, pp. 34-48. He administered the Act in Limerick.

[y] Wellington's Despatches (1817-25), ii., 219.

[z] For instances of Justices' justice, v. Life of Lord Cloncurry, p. 344.

Catholic Association, and its contentions with the Orange Association, and by the polemical clamours of conflicting zealots."[a]

The Religious Difficulty.

But though Wellesley was so successful in the first part of his labours, the political and religious difficulty utterly baffled and defeated him. The Catholics attacked him because he showed them too little favour, and the Orangemen grudged even that as too much.[b] At first, Wellesley paid particular attention to O'Connell, and it is said that he even asked him for his aid to tranquillise Ireland; but this, though it kindled the fury of the Orangemen, did not satisfy the hopes of the Catholics;[c] for they remarked that patronage still flowed in the old channels, they doubted the sincerity of Wellesley, and were prepared to embarrass his government. An occasion soon presented itself which clearly revealed the feelings of both parties. It was the custom of the Orangemen of Dublin to decorate twice a year with scarves and ribbons the statue of King William which stands opposite the college. Thus on the 12th of July they commemorated the victory of the Boyne, and on the 4th of November the landing in England. This was usually the cause of a riot, in which the two parties tried their strength. On the 11th of July (1823), O'Connell published a letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, addressed to the Marquis, and calling upon him to interfere to prevent decorations and riots.[d] The letter was in phrase respectful, but in spirit insulting, for it very plainly insinuated a doubt of the truth of Wellesley's professions about the Catholics. If he refused, the Catholics would accuse him of insincerity; if he granted the request, the Orangemen would accuse him of being frightened into it by the menaces of the Catholic leader. Accordingly, he took a middle course, and endeavoured by private influences to persuade the Orange Lodges to forego the celebration.[e] But the attempt was vain, and on the morning of the 12th, the Catholics again saw the statue arrayed in the "symbols of faction and blood."[f] In November, however, the Mayor forbade the ceremony some days before, and persisted, in spite of the votes of excited meetings, and the clamour of the Common Council.[g] The government supported him with troops and police, and for three nights the Orangemen attempted in vain to carry out their custom. But they determined on revenge, and a plot was hatched in an Orange Lodge, headed by an official in the Custom House, with the object of driving Lord Wellesley from Ireland by personal violence.[h] The

The Bottle Riots.

theatre was packed, and when Wellesley appeared in it he was saluted by howls for the Popish Lord Lieutenant, and a quart bottle and a heavy rattle were thrown at him from the gallery. He was not injured, but

[a] v. Sheil, i., 377-80, ii.
[b] Sheil, i., 373.
[c] Sheil, 368-70.
[d] v. O'Connell, ii., 374.
[e] Sheil, i., 375.
[f] O'Connell.
[g] Pearce.—Sheil.
[h] v. Plunkett's speech on the Prosecution.

it was an insult which no governor could overlook. Wellesley regarded it not only as a violation of his honour, but as an attempt upon his life; and urged on the prosecution of the offenders by Plunkett, with much personal exasperation. However, when the leading rioters were put upon their trial, the grand jury, consisting chiefly of affiliated Orangemen, threw out the bill of indictment tendered by the Crown. Plunkett accordingly announced his resolution to proceed by ex-officio information, though Manners and Saurin declared it illegal. The trial in fact became a mere contest between the two great parties, and was looked upon as such by all.[i] It resulted in another failure and the triumph of the Orange party. Wellesley and Plunkett were generally derided, and both simultaneously attacked in England and Ireland; Saurin inspired a virulent pamphlet against the administration,[j] and everywhere spoke of Plunkett as a second Jeffries, and of the ex-officio informations as the most flagrant violation of constitutional principle ever attempted.[k] A violent personal quarrel broke out between the Lord Lieutenant and the Chancellor. Manners had persistently carried on a course of intrigues and insults both public and private against Wellesley, and it was reported that the Lord Lieutenant went so far as to send a message to Manners, charging him with treachery, and regretting that his position prevented his sending a challenge with it. One or the other, it was understood, must leave Ireland.

Trial of the Rioters.

In England too the attack broke out. Idleness and weakness had long ago been charged against Wellesley's government by their opponents. Letters said that the Lord Lieutenant shut himself up at the Phœnix Park, lying in bed all day, seeing nobody, only communicating with Secretary Gregory by letter, and never writing to the Cabinet in England at all. Now the prosecution of the rioters drew down more abuse on the Marquis. "Every human being seems to condemn in the strongest terms the conduct of Wellesley: there never was such an ass; and if he has hatched all this trumpery, and made Plunkett his dupe, he will never get over it." There was much talk of the removal of the Lord Lieutenant, and some of a revolution in the Cabinet owing to him. Peel was only lying back to make a strong case before attacking Wellesley and overthrowing the Grenville party.

Attack on Wellesley's conduct.

However, the attack on the legality of the ex-officio informations turned out a failure; for it was asserted and proved by Plunkett in the House of Commons, that Saurin had been guilty of the very method of proceeding for which he now abused his successor. The quarrel between Wellesley and Manners was patched up by a compromise which restored some appearance of

[i] The scene of the trial is very graphically described by Sheil, i., 385.
[j] Sheil, ii., 8-12. [k] Sheil, i., 401-410.

harmony, but must have been very humiliating to Wellesley. In fine, the government gained a new lease of life, and it was said that "Wellesley had again the cards in his own hand, if he only knew how to play them, but the next revoke would be fatal." All these attacks and insults had wounded the Lord Lieutenant deeply, and a letter which he wrote to Plunkett some little time later, shows the bitterness of feeling they excited in him:—[1]

Wellesley's position.

"I am left without support or countenance, to submit to the kicks of the ass and the dirt of the monkey, reduced to the condition of a villain and a slave on a mock throne. I am indeed most unhappy here, degraded, vilified, an object of scorn and detestation, without protection or even care, anxious to save the country, able to save it as far as relates to my own powers: frustrated, baffled, and betrayed by all my own agents, encompassed by traitors even at my own table, the whole machinery of my own government working to my destruction."

But in spite of all the tumult of the capital, the pacification of the South of Ireland was steadily going on, and Lord Wellesley was enabled to relax the pressure of the Insurrection Act, and when he asked for its renewal, to ask for it in a considerably modified form. But this success was only apparent, and the tranquillity only temporary.[m] In May, 1823, about the time when those personal quarrels were ending, a new political danger arose. Early in that month, O'Connell and Sheil met in Wicklow, and arranged the foundation of the Catholic Association. On the 12th, it held its first meeting, and went on gathering strength rapidly. But at first, its influence was confined almost exclusively to the poorer classes, it was not joined by Catholics of the higher classes. Nor did it at first seem so dangerous as it soon became, but it spread its ramifications quietly over the country while the Lord Lieutenant was congratulating himself on the success of his measures.

The Catholic Association.

The position of Wellesley did not become any more pleasant with time.[n] In March, 1824, he was thinking of resigning. "There is no disposition in England," he wrote, "to give me support or credit, but a contemptuous silence even of my name, a contemptuous if not a treacherous suppression of my communications on the most important affairs of my government." He referred to his Despatch on the Burials question,—the Protestant clergy were to be empowered to permit the performance of Catholic and Dissenting burials by their respective ministers in the churchyards.[o] This the cabinet decided to do, but they would not print the Despatch in which Wellesley argued for the measure, for they considered that it would be courting opposition to do so. Wellesley no doubt wished by means of it to justify himself

[1] Plunkett, ii., 145.
[m] Wyse. Catholic Association.
[n] Letter to Plunkett.
[o] Court and Cabinets of George IV., ii., 37.

before the Catholics and the country, and retrieve his position. Meanwhile, the conflict between the Catholic and the Orange association had begun, and in July the Orangemen were confidently hoping for an explosion.[p] Then a new Lord Lieutenant would be sent, the disturbances would be put down by force instead of concession, and there would be a return to the old system of government. In September, Canning came over to pass a week with Wellesley.[q] Nobody believed that he came over from personal friendship; it was thought to point to new political combinations. At home the Duke of Wellington, Sidmouth, Bathurst, Peel, Lonsdale, and others, were trying to form a reactionary government. They would remove Wellesley, and Lord Morley or Lord Bristol were spoken of as probable successors. On the other hand, Canning, Liverpool, Lansdowne, and Wellesley, were to make a reform government, and give especial attention to Irish affairs. Canning, it was reported, intended to play off one brother against the other, and strengthen himself by the name of the Lord Lieutenant against the preponderance of the Duke. But these intrigues came to nothing, and at the end of 1824, Wellesley was still Lord Lieutenant.[r]

Canning's visit.

All through the year, the Catholic Association had been increasing in power, for the opposition of Orangemen had forced it into life and vigour. The Catholic gentry had joined it, the higher clergy had given in their adhesion. Malcontents high and low were now leagued together, and that union of all classes, that junction of political, religious, and social grievances in the one demand for emancipation, on which the strength and importance of the Association rested, had now begun. It spread over all Ireland, it contained 25,000 priests, its revenue of £500 a month was levied by 30,000 collectors from six millions of people.[s] The question of rebellion depended on the prudence and discretion of the leaders of the Association. There was a rumour widely believed, that the Protestants were all to be massacred on Christmas Eve, and many of them sat up all night to be ready for the attack. There were letters from Ireland accusing Wellesley of supineness and incapacity, and praying that he might be superseded. At one time it was said that the Duke of York was to be sent to Ireland; at another, that the moment a rising began, the Duke of Wellington was to appear with a great army and dictatorial power to play the Cromwell. In January, Wellesley was supposed to have sent in his resignation, and offered to go out again to India, and

The Association.

[p] Wellington's Despatches, ii., 290.

[q] Court and Cabinet of George IV., ii., 119-126. Diary of Lord Colchester, iii., 340.

[r] v. Letters of Dr. Curtis (R. C. Archbishop) to Duke of Wellington. Despatches, ii., 362.

[s] Despatches, ii., 385-387.

the Duke of Buckingham eagerly expected to be appointed his successor in Ireland.

The Catholic Claims.

In the Spring of 1825, the Relief Bill was to be brought forward again, and it was generally believed that it would be passed. For the popular excitement made it a necessary measure to preserve the public peace, and rebellion was considered the certain consequence of its rejection. The ministers determined to vindicate themselves from the imputation of yielding to fear of the Catholics, and a Bill was prepared to put down illegal associations. It did not mention either the Orange Lodges or the Catholic Association, though Wellesley wished it to name both, but it was simply an act to amend and extend the Convention act, and the law against secret societies, so as to include both. It was regarded as the indispensable preliminary of any measure of emancipation, and was accordingly passed in February. In March, Burdett brought forward his Relief Bill, and party strife in Ireland ceased for a time, to watch its progress. With it were two other measures, one to disfranchise the forty shilling freeholders, and the other to give a state provision to the Catholic church. These Bills passed the lower House successfully, but the opposition they met with in the House of Lords, and the declaration of the Duke of York against them, caused the rejection of the claims by a majority of 48.[t] The effect of this on Wellesley was overwhelming. He had been one of the earliest and most consistent supporters of the Catholic claims, and to him it seemed almost a personal grief. Moreover, he considered it a public calamity, for he fully expected an instant revolution, which he and his government would be alike unable to stem, and he prepared to meet it. "I am not in the least disturbed or agitated," he wrote to Plunkett, "the occasion is too great for passion, the sorrow too deep for lamentation.[u] If ever that spirit which 'raised to height of noblest temper heroes old' can inspire this age, we should invoke its aid, for we require every effort both of courage and temper. For my own part, I look to the lot assigned me in the public calamity with gratitude to God, and an humble but stedfast confidence in my final reward here and hereafter, for the just and faithful discharge of my high duty."

Effects of the Defeat.

But the Catholics did not break out into open rebellion as Wellesley expected, nor did they on the other hand, in obedience to the law, dissolve the Association. O'Connell had boasted that he would drive a coach and four through the act, and by a simple evasion he fulfilled his threat. The Association re-formed itself "for purposes of public and private charity, and such others as are not prohibited by the act," and continued the work of quietly

[t] Majority for the claims in the Lower House, 21, February 28th. Majority against the claims in the Upper House, 65. Plunkett's Life, May 17th.

[u] Plunkett, ii., 203.

organising Ireland with the regularity of an army to gain the great end. Against this peaceable conspiracy the government could do little. "Firmness, calmness, perseverance, and steady inaction," were the principles on which Lord Wellesley in his own words continued to rule Ireland, and the country remained quiet during the next two years, though that was hardly owing to his policy. There were threats of a famine in 1826, but no national distress. There was little violence, but that result was mainly the work of the Association. "The man who violates the law," said O'Connell, "strengthens the hands of the enemy." Also, the Catholics did not despair of their success by constitutional means. Above all, they had a well-founded confidence in their own strength, and the substance of power was in their hands. "Lord Wellesley's government," wrote an Irish member to Lord Liverpool, "may almost be said to hold possession by sufferance; Ireland is governed by a republic of agitators through the clergy of a sect." It could not have been with much regret that the Marquis Wellesley left Ireland at the end of 1827. He had done what he could, with wavering support in England, and determined opposition in his own government, to hold the balance between the two parties, and to restore prosperity to Ireland. But it was impossible that he should succeed in maintaining peace between Catholic and Protestant, while the great measure of justice was still withheld. It was impossible that he should establish permanent tranquillity among the people, unless Parliament had given a more careful and enlightened attention to the economic condition of Ireland, or unless he had been invested with much greater powers.[v]

Wellesley's Policy.

During the whole period of his government, Wellesley suffered from frequent ill health, and that perhaps was the cause of the supineness, the fitful energy, and the morbid sensibility of which he was accused. So it was not wonderful that his government of Ireland gained him no additional fame, and that the exploits of the Governor General were not enhanced by the successes of the Lord Lieutenant.[w] "Like a fine actor in a village, he wasted the same energy of genius upon a contracted scene which he had before displayed upon a wider and more exalted stage."

In December, 1827, when the Cabinet was breaking up, Gooderich proposed to admit Lords Wellesley and Holland into it, and to give a place to Brougham, but the King refused.[x] A few days later, however,

Ministerial Arrangements.

[v] Malcolm stayed with Wellesley some little time in Ireland, and writes thus to the Duke of Wellington:—

"In some of the Southern counties nothing short of the exercise of arbitrary power over the proprietors and occupiers of the soil, as well as the disturbers of the peace, could effect a speedy settlement. I wish I had them, as I had some worse counties in Malwa, and that I could act without fear of the Parliament, the Lord Chief Justice, and the hangman, and set about putting the Zemindars and ryots to rights." Kaye's Life of Malcolm.

[w] Sheil, i., 374.

[x] Supplementary Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, 1819-27, vol. iv., 168. Dalling's Life of Palmerston, i., 207.

Wellesley was sent for from Ireland, and it was reported that he was to be placed at the Treasury or the Home Office, or even at the head of the government. Just when he arrived, the Cabinet broke up, and it was expected that the King or the Duke of Wellington would have applied to him to form a government.[y] There was more cordial intimacy between the two brothers than there had been for the last twenty years, and it was said that the Duke had encouraged his brother's expectations.[z] It was understood that when the Duke was summoned to the King, he should recommend the Marquis as more fit to take the lead in civil affairs than himself. The Marquis expected the Duke's return with much anxiety, anticipating his own elevation; and the disappointment which ensued occasioned a coldness between the two eminent men. After this disappointment, Lord Wellesley took little part in public affairs, and lived almost wholly in retirement. He spoke in the debate on the Catholic Claims, on the 10th of June, 1828; and the difference in public views between the two brothers revealed itself plainly in their speeches on that motion. When Lord Grey formed his ministry in 1830, Wellesley was appointed Lord Steward of the Household. He had apparently changed his opinion as to the merits of the Reform Bill, and his Irish experience must have taught him the danger of resisting the demand of a people. But he took no part whatever in the discussions of the bill or in the debates generally. "He comes to the House of Lords," says Mr. Greville,[a] "and talks of making a speech every now and then, of which he is never delivered, and he comes to Court, where he sits in a corner and talks with as much fire and liveliness as ever, and with the same neat shrewd causticity which formerly distinguished him."[b] When, therefore, in 1833, the Marquis was again appointed to the government of Ireland, the appointment was derided. People said that he was worn out and effete, and O'Connell bitterly complained that the "dotage of Wellesley was allowed to slumber in the viceregal dignity." But he soon exhibited an activity, which made some of his detractors confess that they had no idea of the energy that was in him, and acknowledge that he was doing real work in Ireland.[c]

Wellesley's retirement.

Appointment to Ireland.

At the time when Lord Wellesley undertook the government, the crisis of the Repeal agitation was over: O'Connell's motion had been defeated, and the excitement it caused was subsiding.[d] The agitation for the abolition of tithes still continued, and the government was

State of Ireland.

[y] Court and Cabinets of George IV., ii., 364.

[z] Dalling's Life of Palmerston, i., 213. "I have been told by a gentleman yet alive, and likely to be well-informed on the subject."

[a] Greville, iii. 31. [b] Ibid., iii., 31.

[c] Ibid., iii., 31. [d] Ibid., iii., 31.

engaged in the preparation of a bill to deal with that question. Crime and outrages had been much diminished by the Coercion Act of the previous year. So, while Lord Wellesley, by the continued enforcement of that act, was trying to produce order in the country, Mr. Littleton came over to Ireland to prepare a Tithe Bill.[e] The Coercion Act which Lord Wellesley was charged to carry out, was directed to two main ends: to prevent agitation, and to prevent the nightly gatherings in which drill went on and incendiarism and rebellion were concerted. For these purposes, the Lord Lieutenant was entrusted with what he termed "great and extraordinary powers of an arbitrary spirit," and the fullest development of these powers was in the court-martial clauses, and in those which enabled him to prohibit any public meetings. Lord Wellesley's predecessor had not used the court-martial clauses; and the power of prohibiting public meetings had been found useless by him during the whole course of the agitation for the repeal of the Union. The country was now much quieter, and Lord Wellesley went further. "I never applied the act to the meetings.[f] I left the frantic project of the repeal of the Union to destroy itself by discussion and free reason: wherever I have applied the law the cases were irresistible, and it was loudly and repeatedly demanded by the voice of the country. Even then I applied it reluctantly and with every precaution, and it has everywhere been attended with complete effect."[g]

The Coercion Act.

A renewal of this act was to take place in July, 1834, and it was agreed by the ministers that the court-martial clauses should not be re-enacted, but there was division and doubt in the Cabinet as to the necessity of the public meeting clauses. In the earlier part of the year, in his despatch of April 10th, Wellesley recommended in general terms the renewal of the whole act (with the exception of the court-martial clauses), and till the eleventh of June he continued to advocate it. At the same time that the Coercion Act was to be brought before the House of Commons, the new Tithe Bill was to be introduced, and much opposition was expected for the latter. It would not be sufficiently sweeping to satisfy O'Connell and his party, so they would coalesce with the Tories to defeat the government. So Lord Brougham wrote privately to Wellesley, and persuaded Littleton to write also, and pressed him to inform

Renewal of the Act.

[e] Ibid., iii., 31.

[f] The letter to Earl Grey. Hatherton: Edinburgh Review, vol. 134, p. 300.

[g] This was not written till some time after the transactions mentioned. Letter to Lord Hatherton. Hatherton, 109.

The principle of the Act was obnoxious to Lord Wellesley, and he afterwards told Littleton so. "Ireland never will be quieted by the annual expedients of suspending the laws and constitution of the realm. We must endeavour as soon as possible to return to the ordinary laws, and to be satisfied with a vigorous and firm administration of them. Until we are fixed on that rock, we never shall know genuine peace."

the government that he could do without the public meeting clauses. This loss would gratify the Irish members, and break up the threatened combination against the Tithe Bill. Lord Wellesley was asked to give up certain powers which he had never used, in order to facilitate the passage of a measure indispensable to the peace of Ireland. He was not at that time aware of the division in the Cabinet upon the subject of the public meeting clauses. He did not know that while Brougham, Althorpe, Littleton, and Durham were for the omission of the clauses, the Premier with other ministers took the opposite side. He had not for a long time heard from Melbourne, the Home Secretary, and was therefore unaware of the opinions of the Cabinet.[h] So on the 21st of June, and again a day or two later, he wrote to Earl Grey, stated the manner in which he had administered the act, and said that he did not consider the preservation of the clauses, as they stood in the act, essential to the public tranquillity of Ireland, or that the omission of them would endanger the public safety. He added that he thought that the abandonment of them would show the people the liberal character of the government, would produce a salutary effect on the House of Commons, would accelerate the progress of the Bill, and unite the Cabinet against the array of the enemy. The inconsistency was not very great. He had never specifically recommended the renewal of the clauses, he had merely said in general terms that the Coercion Act should be continued. Over two months had elapsed since that time, and Ireland had become much quieter during the interval. This communication Lord Grey persisted in regarding as a private and confidential letter. It was, however, evidently a confidential despatch purposely sent in a non-official manner through a non-official channel. It did not change Grey's determination, and only widened the breach in the Cabinet, which, at the instigation of the Premier, now decided to renew the clauses. Directly Wellesley knew the dissensions which his letter had given rise to, he did his best to heal them. He intimated to the Premier that he should be satisfied with whatever course the Cabinet chose to adopt, and subsequently by a regular despatch of the second of July, he stated that "it would be highly dangerous to the public peace to allow the act for the more effectual suppression of local disturbances and dangerous associations in Ireland to expire." But the indiscretion of Littleton, and the treachery of O'Connell, resulted in the discussion in the House of Commons on the 3rd of July, Lord

Division in the Cabinet.

Result of the disagreement.

[h] Wellesley regarded Melbourne's negligence to keep him informed of the opinions of the Cabinet as the cause of his unfortunate letter, and indirectly of the break-up of the Cabinet, and the consequent accusations of indecision and tergiversation against himself. "You were the culprit," he told him, "and you made me the victim." Hatherton, p. 22.

Grey's declaration in the Lords on the fourth, and the resignation of Lord Althorp on the seventh.

Grey now resigned, and Melbourne took his place at the head of the government, but Wellesley remained in Ireland till the dismissal of the ministers by the king in October, 1834. The last act of his administration was to draw up a scheme for the fuller extension of patronage to the Catholics, who, in spite of the fact that the law entitled them to admission, were still excluded from the executive administration, and from nearly all posts of any dignity or emolument.[i] This recommendation was made in September, 1834, but it was not carried into effect by the Melbourne government before they left office. When Peel's ministry came in, he took part in the opposition against them, and with his own hand drew up the resolution which led to their fall.[j] When the Whigs regained office, he might reasonably have expected a third appointment to the Lord Lieutenancy, for the heads of the three governments of 1834 had all proclaimed his fitness for that post. He himself expected it, and received the first intimation that he was not to return to Ireland from one of the doorkeepers of the House of Lords, whom he overheard as he passed, telling another person of Lord Mulgrave's appointment.[k] Wellesley accepted, however, the office of Lord Chamberlain, but he only held it for a month. His resignation was variously interpreted.[l] The Earl of Roden attempted to convert it into a censure upon Mulgrave's government, but this Wellesley distinctly denied. Some said it was disgust at the ascendancy of O'Connell, and the alliance between him and the ministers, and to this Wellesley made no reply.[m]

Wellesley is not given office.

However, it is not necessary to search deeply for the causes which led to his retirement from public life. He was now seventy-five years old, and he had never been in very good health for the latter part of his life. During the seven years which remained to him, he had the satisfaction of seeing his great services at length appreciated. In 1837, the East India Company voted him a grant of £20,000, and four years later they erected his statue in the India House. He occupied himself in reading Demosthenes and Homer with

Wellesley retires from public life.

[i] Brougham, Statesmen of George III., vol ii., cabinet edition, pp. 250-2.

[j] Brougham. Lord Russell does not mention it.

[k] Brougham.

[l] Greville Memoirs, vol. iii. Parliamentary Debates.

[m] It was probably dislike to the Melbourne-O'Connell union. Wellesley describes O'Connell in a letter to Littleton. "He is a person who has cast off all the ties of human society; he is under no restraint of civil, moral, or religious obligation—bellua centiceps." Hatherton, p. 75.

The Melbourne government carried out Wellesley's scheme for the Catholics, and got credit for their justice to them; at the same time they allowed him to be traduced as having abandoned that cause. He made no attempt to defend himself from the unjust accusation. But he left instructions in his will for the publication of such documents "as shall protect my honour against the slanders of Melbourne and his pillar of state, O'Connell." Brougham's Statesmen.—Memoirs in the Asiatic Annual Register, 1842.

Lord Brougham, and writing Latin and Greek verses which he collected and published in 1840. Up to his death, he retained his mental powers unimpaired, and his own testimony to that effect in a letter he wrote to Addington, is worth quoting.[a]

"Thank my God, He has granted me the use of all my faculties to this hour, when they are all not only as perfect, especially memory, as they ever were, but even more so. This is a resource to me which sheds balm over every infirmity of the body. The other day I quoted the old verses to my brother Arthur, 'My mind to me a kingdom is;' and it is strictly true: for the vivacity of my mind, by the grace of its Maker, supplies me with new life and spirit every hour."

He died on the 20th of September, 1842, and was buried at Eton, in accordance with the wish he had ex-
Death, 1842. pressed in the verses which he wrote for his own epitaph:—

"Here, on the threshold of life, I learnt to seek the pure light of ancient days, and to love the plain paths of honourable fame. Hither, after long tossing on the wandering seas of fate, I return at last."

To estimate Lord Wellesley fully, it is necessary to consider his personal characteristics and his character, as well as his actions and his career; for they throw a light upon each other which enables us to understand him better.

Like his brother, he was small in stature, and "the glorious little man" was a phrase by which an enthusiastic subordinate denoted him. Sheil and Hazlitt have described his appearance: they each point out different characteristics, and seem to show the two sides of his character. The one recalls rather the portrait by Lawrence; the other, the bust by Nollekens.

"He advances into his place in the House of Lords," writes Hazlitt, "with his head erect and his best foot foremost. The star sparkles on his breast, and the garter is seen bound tight below his knee. It might be thought that he still trod a measure on soft carpets, and was surrounded, not only by spiritual and temporal lords, but

'Store of ladies whose bright eyes
Rain influence and judge the prize.'

"The chivalrous spirit that shines through him, the air of gallantry in his personal as well as his rhetorical appeals to the House, glances a partial lustre on the woolsack as he addresses it. His heedless vanity throws itself unblushingly on the unsuspecting candour of his hearers, and ravishes mute admiration. You would almost guess of this nobleman beforehand that he was

[a] Letter to Addington, February 17th, 1840. Pellew's Life of Sidmouth, vol. iii.

a Marquis,—something higher than an Earl, and less important than a Duke. Nature has just fitted him for the niche he fills in the scale of rank or title. He is a finished miniature picture set in brilliants,—his character is elegance. Elegance is something more than ease: it is more than a freedom from awkwardness or restraint.[o] It implies a precision, a polish, a sparkling effect, spirited yet delicate, which is perfectly exemplified in Lord Wellesley's face and figure."

"I never saw a finer head," writes Sheil; "it realised the beau ideal of all that I had previously conceived requisite for the physiognomy of a statesman: his fixed, illuminated eyes, his lofty and vaulted forehead sprinkled with a few white hairs,—his bold and commanding mouth, and the aspiring and eagle-like expression of soul which pervaded his countenance, struck me with admiration."

The conversation of the Marquis was distinguished, according to Mr. Greville, by "fire and liveliness, neat and shrewd causticity," and it was also embellished by puns and classical quotations. An unfriendly critic observes that "he would have been an excellent talker if he had not been at Eton,[p] for that resulted in too frequent reminiscences of the Latin poets. His waking hours are rendered unhappy to himself and mankind by alternate citations from Martial and the Mahratta war." But Sir Walter Scott is a more competent and kindly critic. "The Marquis' talk gave me the notion of the kind of statesmanship one might have expected in a Roman Emperor, accustomed to keep the whole world in his view, and to divide his time between ministers like Maecenas and wits like Horace."

The best scholar of his day at Eton, "he had inhaled amidst its classic shades," says Alison, "that delicacy of taste and proficiency in the composition of the ancient languages for which that seminary has so long been celebrated." Lord Brougham considers the verses on Bedlam, and those on the French conquests, Wellesley's best productions. De Quincey, in his review of the collection published in 1841, praises the epitaph on Lord Brougham's daughter, and the lines on Chantrey. Being fond of literature, he naturally patronised literary men.[q] In Ireland he endeavoured to secure a pension for Moore, but the poet refused it. In India he patronised the Asiatic Society and Oriental learning generally. The Orientalists were uncertain whether he was more like Maecenas or Cosmo de Medici. "O Mornington!" writes an enraptured member of that Society,—

[o] Hazlitt's description is in the "Essay on the Look of a Gentleman." "Plain Speaker," vol. ii. It refers to the Lord Wellesley of 1807. Sheil's is in his "Irish Sketches," i., 383, and is dated 1823.

[p] Blackwood, xlii., 77.

[q] Asiatic Annual Register, 1802. Miscellaneous Tracts, 113-119. Letter from Mackintosh to Wellesley, Pearce, ii., 371.

"You who in learning classical excel,
Will patronise the arts you love so well."

And again,

"O Mornington! yourself of arts the grace,
Encourage learning with a fond embrace."

Lord Brougham's criticism of Wellesley's speeches may be applied with scarcely any change to his despatches.[r] The style diffuse and characterised by a redundancy of words, but nothing superfluous or roundabout in the reasonings, nothing dilatory or feeble in the conceptions which produced the plans. All Lord Wellesley's speeches were prepared with very great care. The speech on the French Revolution is the most elaborate, but that on the Catholic Claims in 1812 is the best. The delivery of these speeches was generally too artificial: the gestures affected, and more suited to the stage than the council. "He put himself in a sort of artificial passion, and was in a state of cold inflammation all the time," says one of his hearers.[s] He expressed his alarm at the dangers which threatened the Irish Constitution, with a dignified and graceful fright, which reminded Lord Mountnorris of Garrick receiving a ghost. Sheil saw him speak, and at once compared him with Kean; but, he adds, "his whole frame seemed agitated and inspired, his person seemed to have lost the pettiness of his dimensions, and to have been heightened by the informing spirit."[t]

The leading motive of Wellesley's public life, was, he tells us, "the noble ambition to obtain power and honour by deserving them." In one of his speeches on the Catholic claims, he enlarges on the injustice of excluding Catholics from the public service, and uses these words: "I have always thought it to be the greatest glory, and the noblest species of ambition, in the members of a free state, to be able to aspire to the high and distinguished offices of that state,—to aim at rising in its public service, to be engaged in discussing its policy, in amending its laws or improving its institutions, in leading its armies or conducting its wars abroad, and afterwards to be rewarded by their Sovereign, and to feel conscious that their services have elevated them through the forms and to the ranks which the Constitution opens to them."

This ambition was to a very great extent satisfied in India. He had ample room for the exercise of his abilities, almost unlimited authority, and the most exalted rank. He directed

[r] A critic compares his Despatches with the Duke of Wellington's, and characterises them thus:—

"His advance in an argument is like that of an Eastern potentate through a conquered province: it is made with all the circumstances of barbaric pomp. We admit the pageant is admirably got up, but prefer getting over the ground with more rapidity and less ostentation." Blackwood, xliii., 411.

[s] Crabb Robinson on the East India Speech, 1813. [t] Irish Sketches, i., 384.

armies, he subjugated kingdoms, he made and unmade princes. Naturally proud, imperious, and somewhat vain, the possession of such great power encouraged the growth of these faults. "Every Englishman," says Mackintosh, "who resides long in India has his mind emasculated by submission or corrupted by despotic power. Lord Wellesley is indisputably at the head of the latter genus, a sultanised Englishman."[u] "He is inflated with pride, and with his own consequence," remarked George III. to Mr. Rose; "he assumes to himself the exclusive merit of all that has been done in the East; when he returns his head will be quite turned, there will be no enduring him." It was generally said in England that he based exaggerated claims to honour upon his Indian administration, and it is easy to understand why it should be so. The prevailing ignorance of Indian affairs, and the want of interest taken in them, led with most people to a depreciation of his services, and on his part to an excessive appreciation of them. For he was always egotistical, and inclined to view matters entirely from the one standpoint which he had adopted as his own. "It was admitted," says Sheil of one of these exhibitions of Wellesley's egotism, "that he was a splendid luminary, but it was observed also that he had a rotation upon himself."[v] If we add to this defect an impatience of opposition, and a sensitiveness to criticism, which the absence of both had developed, and a quickness of temper which ill-health often sharpened, his failure as a Cabinet Minister becomes sufficiently accountable. These were not in reality great faults, but they were important in their effects. They hindered his success in English political life, just as the barnacles on a ship's bottom impede its course. He never seems cordially to have worked together with his colleagues in the ministry. The change from undivided supremacy to what his brother calls "the republic of a Cabinet," was as great as the change from the torrid to the temperate zone. It may have been beneficial, but the Marquis did not find it pleasant, nor was it suited to the constitution of his mind.

The effects of the Indian administration on Wellesley's habits were no less marked. In India, his position as the representative of the sovereign and his natural pride resulted in his demanding a ceremonious respect, which, said George III., was much beyond what was due to his station.[w] When more than once told that he was exacting more from those about him than the King did, his Lordship replied, "Then the King is wrong, but that is no reason why I should improperly relax also." "In Ireland," Sheil wrote of the Lord Lieutenant that he "seemed to forget that he was merely the temporary representative of the royal power, and personated his sovereign with too absolute a fidelity

[u] Irish Sketches. [v] Ibid., i., 372. [w] Rose's Diary.